The
COMMONWEAL

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## *Russia and Federations*

WITH increasing frequency and authority the Russian Government is proving that it does not intend to be caught unawares at the end of the war and that when the fighting stops the Russian Government will not be standing there with a grin, amazed, delighted and with no plans. It has the plans and perhaps we—Great Britain and the United States—have our plans; perhaps after the Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill meeting it will be found that our plans and the Russian plans have been made to fit together. The Governments in Exile of numerous European nations have plans also, but here we do not have to wait for the future, or speculate, for the Russians have now made it clear that they consider some of these plans inadmissible—especially plans for federations—first because they might be construed as plans to form a cordon sanitaire protecting Europe from Russia; secondly because they are formulated by governments which the Russians are inclined to consider not governments at all.

"*Izvestia* [UP dispatch in the New York *Times,* November 19] said that Mr. Molotoff's view was that the exiled governments of small states [he is polite to de Gaulle] were not in sufficiently close touch with their people to insure full expression of popular will on the subject [of federation], that even governments formed after the war might lack sufficient authority and stability to commit their people to a federation, and that only after stabilization would small nations have sufficient confidence in their own independence to start discussing the federation idea."

It is clear enough that if federations are planned in Europe which "reek pungently of the long bankrupt anti-Soviet policy" (*Izvestia* again) and which, perforce, must reek also with an anti-German policy, such federations will be no more than attempts to regroup European forces for the inevitable war they will provoke. If the federative idea is no more than a new formula for the balance of power, it creates automatically its own enemy. The peoples of Europe—there is no question of small or great countries: after this war all European countries will be small countries—want freedom from the fear of war. After this war Russia will be in Europe, Russia will not be beyond the margin of Europe; the peoples of Europe will want freedom from the fear of war with Russia. The Russians are right in supposing that the peoples of Europe will not rush willingly into provocative federation against Russia.

The Russians also are right in supposing that the peoples of Europe will aspire to "sufficient confidence in their own independence." Since Great Britain, the United States and the peoples of Europe will suffice to guarantee their independence from any proximate German threat, it remains clearly a fact that no nation more than Russia itself can hasten the moment when such sufficing confidence can exist. No nation more than Russia can prevent even the hope of its coming.

We can see no compelling reasons why Russia would wish to prevent that confidence from arising. Surely no reasons of military security or boundaries. For were Russia to absorb the entire Central European territory, and then Germany, and then France, with each step forward she would but approach inevitable conflict with the extra-European world—burdened, hampered in this conflict by the bitter and the oppressed within the unnatural confines of such a Russian state. And were this advance concealed and indirect it would be equally fatal to the peace the Russian people aspire to also. But if the peoples of Europe and the Russian people can be given that confidence which should spring from the defeat of a tyrannical nation and the victory of nations determined to prove themselves just, wise and peaceful, then the federation of Europe will give new life to the exhausted and the broken.

## *American Optimism*

THE PAST WEEK included several setbacks in the military progress of the United Nations. These reverses were discounted. In Italy it was the truly torrential autumn rains; the Aegean



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island action was conceived of and successfully carried out as a diversion; the Russian retreat from Zhitomir, the first since the beginning of the summer offensive, was due to over-extended lines and has since been more than offset in other sectors. In fact, optimism as to early victory continues in the ascendant.

In Congress the subsidy plan to prevent runaway inflation continues to be sabotaged, while a bill to subsidize small newspapers by paying them for war bond advertising was actually adopted. We have no final report as to the Congressional decision as to professional baseball for 1944, but it must have won some sort of approval or encouragement as two of the clubs were said to be wrangling about training next spring at Atlantic City. And so we fight this war at home.

It has been our constant contention that many postwar activities must be prepared for now. Demobilization of men and industry, foreign relief and rehabilitation, international political collaboration require months of preliminary planning. But it does seem that recently accounts of these activities by their very numbers have been building up with the public the impression that the war is already won. Rumors from European neutral countries as to imminent German collapse have had more weight with many than the testimony from the battle lines. The stock market has continued to go down from fears of peace.

Every soldier wants to get back home and to resume his career as a civilian—just as the men in every army do—and this is reflected in the civilian populace. But over here there is the added factor of still being able to believe that the whole thing will soon be over with. To countless Americans victory means the opportunity to turn our backs once more on the rest of the world, to build up a new highly productive national existence with a flock of new gadgets that will make leisure time more varied and entertaining. It is not that Americans still have, as a whole, overwhelming theoretical objections to international activity on the part of the United States; it is simply that personally they wish to be let alone. Perhaps American optimism about early victory is justified by facts which the government still withholds from us. From here, judging by the papers, it seems to us that too many Americans are already complacently counting their chickens in a war still far from accomplished. How much more ready will they be to let things take their course in the critical years immediately following the war? Determination to see the thing through is lacking.

### *Pegler's Stepchild*

IT PROBABLY will not please the American Civil Liberities Union to have its excellent program for "democracy in trade unions" credited to Westbrook Pegler, and yet in all honesty—and we have said plenty of nasty things about Mr. Pegler—what might be called his left-handed parentage must be acknowledged. By hammering away at it, he has done organized labor a great disservice, but he has also done it a service, forcing its friends to admit that abuses exist and forcing them to think about ways to cure these abuses. One must earnestly hope that labor itself will see the necessity, in its own interest, of cleaning house wherever house-cleaning is needed, and that those labor leaders who look upon their jobs as sources of power and wealth will be thrown into some more appropriate place than high office in a union.

A committee of the ACLU has worked for two years to produce the eighty-six page discussion of this subject which it now makes available to the public. It may be obtained by anyone interested for 25 cents; we hope shortly to publish a full-length article in THE COMMONWEAL dealing with this program in detail. For the moment it will suffice briefly to sketch out what the problem is. Until recently the struggle between labor and capital has been so one-sided that many real elements in the problem were generally overlooked in the thick of the fight. With the present advantageous position of labor assured by so much recent state and federal legislation, these elements are beginning to stick out like porcupine's quills, and they are provoking an unthinking reaction against all labor unionism. For in the relationship between employers, unions, and the rank and file there are obviously three sets of rights and duties which may at times come into violent conflict. In addition, there are the rights and duties of the general public. Thus the members of a labor union may find themselves tyrannized by the officers of their own union. And there are times when the union, acting through its officers, but without the knowledge and consent of its members, can conspire with an employer against the interest of the general public. There are times when a union can act as a monopoly just as ruthless and unjust and amoral as the worst business monopoly. All these things are deplorable and can be used as weapons to discredit the legitimate organization of labor. And all these things do happen, do exist, even though they may not be characteristic of the "main current of American trade unionism," as the twenty-six persons who introduce the ACLU's program emphatically point out.

Like all problems which involve human beings, this problem of reconciling the rights and duties and power of various groups is an involved problem which cannot be solved in a few simple formulae. Unfortunately Mr. Pegler is not aware of this, and he will probably be surprised at the complexity and subtlety of his stepchild. But this is the stepchild's principal merit, for it deals with hard realities and is therefore a solid contribution toward solving a very real and subtle problem.

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# *"The Spanish Labyrinth"*

## What preceded Spain's civil war

**Alfredo Mendizabal**

IT IS not an easy task to write a good book on Spain, penetrating to the very substance of her people, nor is it a simple task to give meaning and explanation to facts and events which are apparently illogical. This requires unusual intellectual and emotional understanding, profound insight, and above all, love. All too frequently, Spaniards themselves do not understand one another (and for this reason they do not get along together); therefore how can a foreigner—especially one with the outlook of an Anglo-Saxon—disentangle the mass of outward appearances which belie the true nature of a people which is both out-spoken and impenetrable, traditional and changing, ever dissatisfied, burning and passionate?

Gerald Brenan has undertaken this task and has almost wholly succeeded. Here you do not have another of those all-too-frequent inquisitive and hurried travelers who finds what he is seeking: precisely that which all preceding writers have reported. Mr. Brenan is no mere visitor; he lived in Spain for many years between the two world wars. Formerly a British soldier, he became a farmer in Spain, thereby gaining direct knowledge of the people and their problems, and a keen feeling for their life and struggle, their despairing hope, their illusions and disillusionment. He knows the men and earth of Spain; thus, in his "Spanish Labyrinth,"* human problems appear intimately linked with geographical and climatic conditions: the soil and the sky, those primordial factors and supreme stumbling blocks in the agrarian problem, one of the most serious of all problems, and certainly one never yet solved.

The author has documented himself amply and has skilfully woven together both first-hand information and secondary material. The reference books which he cites are without doubt the most meaningful and useful for a thorough knowledge of each subject he studies; and the attitude which he adopts is generally impartial, or at least aspires toward impartiality, although it often appears influenced by double bias: pro-socialist and anti-clerical. As a whole, Mr. Brenan's book is one of the deepest and most important contributions yet made toward an understanding of Spain's problems, and should be read and thought over by Spaniards as well as by those who, in other countries, are trying to ponder the how and wherefore of events in Spain—events which today constitute a serious source of preoccupation for the world. Perhaps there is an excess of documentation which may cause the reader to be lost in details, albeit very interesting details. But the conscientious treatment of the material is extremely useful and therefore deserves extended analysis and marginal comment.

It is not easy to find one's way out of a labyrinth. Otherwise it would no longer be a labyrinth. Does the author strive to find his way out? His aim appears rather to be expositional and critical. But Spain's problem today is to find a way out which can also be a real solution. There are solutions to suit all tastes, but there is none to suit the taste of all. And this multiplicity of solutions, all radically opposed, yields as its result a violent struggle to impose solutions by force, and hence a permanent disequilibrium. When one group has the upper hand, it attempts to do away with its opponents, refusing to accept opposition as a form of collaboration. More than a century ago, Spain introduced to the world a new use for an old adjective, the "Liberal" Party. Actually, the least widespread attitude in Spanish politics is the liberal attitude, for the characteristic mark of Spanish politics has been violence. For this reason, the very exaggerated pendular rhythm of Spanish life creates the impression of perpetual revolution and reaction, all leading to a sorry state of anarchic dissolution. Each Spaniard is too much concerned with his individual self to have much feeling for the community. What has been called Spanish individualism—and this is today a matter of general knowledge—is a sign of a strong *personalism* (in the best and in the worst sense of the term). And the element which hinders the collective life of Spaniards—their intransigence—is a result of profound convictions which are so deep-rooted, so essential, and so bitter that the people heroically sacrifice their lives for them—and also the lives of others, which is more deplorable. For a Spaniard, living is not important. Nor is dying. It is the manner of living and the manner of dying which is important. And the clash between the

*The Spanish Labyrinth. An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War. Gerald Brenan. Cambridge-Macmillan. $3.75.



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diversified concepts of life develops into violence in Spain, for dissidence soon becomes irreducible opposition. Instead of going off in divergent directions, different lines of thought take closely parallel routes and forever seek each other out, to confront and affront each other.

This constant presence of the antipodal is peculiar to Spanish psychology. Every man defines himself and asserts himself in his own being by contrast with his opposite, whose mere existence excites and incites him; and yet he deeply feels the necessity for this provocation. The struggle against dissidence assumes gigantic proportions in periods of hyper-sensibility. The combative spirit of the Spaniard leads him to create his opponent, even to invent him when he does not exist (thus did Don Quixote battle the windmill), for the mere pleasure of destroying him, even when it is he who, in the end, is bested in the fight. Thus anti-communism and anti-fascism preceded and in some way provoked the appearance of totalitarian parties, which sprang up as a reaction to the forces combatting totalitarianism. The Spaniard reaches extremes of enthusiasm beyond all measure, but his enthusiasm is generally *against* something, rather than *for* it. His fury is an exalted form of his fervor. His love of liberty is so exasperated that it leads him to extreme anarchistic positions, and is so exclusivist that it denies all others the rights he claims for himself. Amazing contrasts of cruelty and nobility can be noted, not only within the people as a whole but in the personality of each of its individuals. The Spanish revolution was full of such incredible contradictions.

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Practically the whole of Mr. Brenan's book is devoted to the antecedents and the remote and immediate causes of the civil war. His book is better described by his sub-title than by the title itself. And there is a lack of proportion in limiting the chapter on the civil war to a mere epilogue of sixteen pages. This is even more lamentably noticeable because of the lucidity of treatment in the preceding chapters. The reader expects an equivalent analysis of the results of the war and of the present situation, which the author summarizes in the old and witty Spanish proverb: "the vanquished, vanquished; and the victor lost."

The underlying causes of the present situation are not reducible to the claims or self-interest of persons or groups; they are not adventitious but spring from the very bowels of the people and from the social pattern which has shaped the people. Mr. Brenan's point of departure is the "old régime," begun in 1874, after the turbulent period following the fall of Isabella the Second, which witnessed an ill-fated attempt at a new dynasty, embodied in Amadeo of Savoy, and an ephemeral First Republic which lasted barely two years. With the Bourbon restoration, in the person of Alfonso XII, there began a period of a certain stability. Two parties peacefully succeeded each other in power—the Conservative and the Liberal. These elements, along with the new Constitution of 1876, democratic within limits and moderately liberal, gave some hope for securing public tranquillity. Spain was thirsty for this after sixty-five years of struggle for independence and liberty, including the Napoleonic war, the tyranny of Ferdinand VII, the Carlist wars, military juntas and Republican cantonalism. But the nation, so eager for calm, had through disillusionment lost her ideals. Canovas, the Conservative leader, artificer of the restoration, was imbued with a spiritless pessimism. And Sagasta, the leader of the Liberal Party, uttered these pessimistic words: "I do not know where we are going, but I do know this, that wherever it is we shall lose our way." There were only slight shades of difference between the parties and compacts between their respective leaders, who enjoyed power in turn, made suffrage a mere fiction. Voting was organized and results were determined in the Home Office, by means of agreements and bargaining between the central power and the local agents of the politicians, or "caciques," who suited their own desires in managing the electoral body. Their methods were far from wholesome; thus usury, for example, served as a common economic-political instrument. They took full advantage of their local influence at Madrid; and in their own districts they exploited the protection which they received from the central government.

The country had lost its élan. "Spaniards," Mr. Brenan says, had been "accustomed to living for great and spectacular ends, and declined when the bourgeois ideal of work, perseverance and duty became the only one which could create or hold together society."

At the end of the nineteenth century, a great shock upset the comfortable inertia of the complacent Spaniards—the Spanish-American War. This, with its disastrous consequences—the loss of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines, aroused a bitter national self-consciousness in the "generation of '98." This generation provoked an intellectual movement whose influence not only has put its stamp upon the last few years, (its ideology has greatly fostered liberal and republican sentiment), but will deeply affect the future after losing the last vestiges of its distant colonial empire, the Spanish people found itself left with a denuded Spain, stripped of that world importance the memory of which had created a mirage that past glories were everlasting; now there was only Spain herself, pared to the bone. From this national disaster the people learned a lesson of humility and asked itself, "At heart, what is this bereft coun-

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try? And, in consequence, what the task set the Spaniards?" Rhetoric was at an end. The pessimism of the generation of '98 was an active and constructive pessimism, although it has appeared harmful to many. Now cut down and reduced to herself alone, Spain had to arise and rebuild and seek new, life-giving directions and ideals, intellectual, social, and political. It was like an awakening, after dreams of grandeur and anxious nightmares. Spaniards had to examine their conscience and decide to work for the dawn of a new day which should be fertile or sterile, according to their own efforts. Why does Brenan, generally so perspicacious, fail to give the thought of '98 the attention which it deserves?

He gives ample treatment to the Catalan question, in its social, economic-industrial, and political aspects. Also to the opposition between liberal, anti-clerical tendencies and the influence of the Church in politics and education. He also deals with the rôle played by the Army in political strife, and by the unions in social matters. This is all in the first part of the book, which ends with the arbitrary, albeit bloodless, dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera. But the central portion of his book is very much more detailed in treatment. He very carefully covers the condition of the working classes: (1) the agrarian question, (2) the Anarchists, (3) the Anarcho-Syndicalists, (4) the Carlists—whose inclusion in this section seems unjustified—(5) the Socialists.

Mr. Brenan, who personally knows farming conditions in Spain, starts with the assumption that Spain is "predominantly an agricultural and a stock-breeding nation, with four and one half millions of workers on the land, compared to only two million in industry"; his figures are based upon statistics for the year 1928 when "the area of cultivated land was between 50 and 60 million acres; that of pasture and underwood was somewhat larger, whilst 15 million acres were totally unproductive." To understand the reason for this, he considers the physical conditions of the Peninsula, with its radical differences in altitude (over 2000 feet above sea-level in tableland), climate and rainfall: "Rainfall is the critical factor. It varies from 60 or even 80 inches in Galicia to less than 10 near Teruel or along the East coast, whilst in some parts of the provinces of Murcia and Almeria there is often no rain at all for several years on end." This is aggravated by an unhappy coincidence, in that the worst soil gets the greatest rainfall and the best is rainless. His study of the agrarian question in each region is on the whole excellent, although lacking balance.

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Spanish anarchism, and especially the peasant anarchism of Andalusia, to which Mr. Brenan devotes considerable space, was inspired by Bakunin from the outset; and the first organization of this type in the Iberian Peninsula was given impetus by the Spanish delegates to the International.

The anarchist mentality has influenced revolutionary movements characteristically Spanish; it might be pointed out that the discipline imposed by Socialism and later by Communism clashed perpetually with the anarchistic tendencies of the Hispanic temperament. The program of 1872 called for the abolition of classes, of individual property and of hereditary wealth and the replacement of the political and overbearing State by a simple administrative organization for public services; it contained anti-patriotic and atheistic planks. The technique of direct, individual action by means of terrorism was inspired by the anarchist Congress of London, held in 1881. There, resolutions were passed accepting "propaganda by deed" as a useful method and urging members to "pay more attention to the technical and chemical sciences." But these methods were later replaced by direct union action, through a revolutionary general strike and the disorganization of production by means of a series of partial strikes. The unions were able to persevere in these with the help of "resistance funds," supplied by the workers' dues. This is the phase of anarcho-syndicalism which was familiar during the present century, especially from 1910 onward. In 1910, the "Confederación Nacional del Trabajo" was established. After the Russian Revolution, it adhered to the Third International, while attempting to graft thereon the Bakuninian spirit of the First. Afterwards, it proclaimed as its own doctrine a form of anarchistic communism, breaking with Moscow at the Congress of Saragossa in 1922. In 1927, the Anarchists founded the "Federación Anarquista Ibérica" which, from then on, inspired the direct and open action of the unions, whilst it protected itself by a certain clandestine spirit and a halo of mystery. Mr. Brenan emphasizes the mystic aspect of Spanish anarchism. He points to it in the personal lives of a number of its adherents, who are men of enlightened asceticism, extremely sober, anti-alcoholic, opposed to gambling, smoking and amusement—even to bull-fights—and, of course, to Catholicism. Strangely enough, in close association with those who sacrificed themselves for their ideals were groups of "pistoleros" and "dinamiteros," recruited among convicts and using the typical methods of gangsterism. They used force and intimidation against bosses, rival socialist or free unions, the police, and arms against those of their own comrades who did not meekly obey the leaders' orders. According to Mr. Brenan, anarchists and Carlists—representing the extreme left and the extreme right—are the most authentic representatives of the independent and immoderate spirit of the Spaniards; this is surely

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true of the deep roots of both these group tendencies.

The founding of the Socialist Party in Madrid in the year 1879 gave form to socialist movement. From the outset, it was inspired by the ideas and tactics of Lafargue and Guesde. The first nucleus was formed by a group of typesetters, with Pablo Iglesias at their head. *El Socialista,* the newspaper representing their views, founded in 1886 with a very limited capital indeed: 927 pesetas, painfully collected bit by bit. Two years later, the "Union General de Trabajadores" arose, independent of the Party, but transmitting the Party's views to the socialist unions. Spanish socialism, incorporated in the Second International, underwent in 1920 a crisis, precipitated by those who wished to unite with the Third International. The two delegates sent to the Moscow Congress returned with conflicting opinions regarding the 21 conditions set down by the Third International. Anguiano considered them acceptable, whereas Professor De los Rios did not. After a very bitter struggle with the pro-communistic majority, De los Rios's report prevailed, thanks to the support of the leader of the Socialist party, Pablo Iglesias, who directed a final appeal to the Congress to reject Moscow's conditions. This was done by a vote of 8880 against 6025. The dissenters, together with certain Anarcho-Syndicalists founded the Spanish Communist Party. Its first inspiration was predominantly Trotskyite. But, up to the time of the civil war, communism did not really have mass support in Spain. Although its work of agitation and propaganda was effective in attracting many intellectuals (dissenters from other movements, bright young men, or fanatics), the workers in general mainly followed Socialist and Anarcho-Syndicalist trends.

Mr. Brenan devotes only a couple of pages to the Catholic Social movement, whose unions go as far back as 1861. For many years, these unions were too closely connected with the clergy, but they finally gained independence in 1912 when the "Federación Nacional de Sindicatos Católicos Libres" was formed. Nevertheless, they prospered only in certain northern provinces. Generally scorned by the Socialists and Anarchists, they did not even have support from Catholic elements. These unions also were handicapped in their efforts by the moral necessity of adhering to Christian principles which the other unions did not recognize. It was mainly in Old Castille, Navarre and the Basque Country that the Catholic unions thrived. It would be very interesting to study their trajectory, along with that of the intellectual strength of a group of Catholics belonging to the "Christianity Democracy" which wished to infuse Spanish society with the social spirit of the Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI a spirit regarded with misgivings by very many Catholics who were all too eager to preserve their privileges in a manner not exactly Christian.

Mr. Brenan analyzes the Republican period, starting with the work of the Constitutional Cortes in 1931. Actually, the Constitution which was formulated there might have been more moderate if the previous draft of the "Juridical Commission" advising the Government had been accepted by the Parliament. But the passions of the political parties, especially the Radical-Socialists and the Socialists, with their representation altogether out of proportion because of the electoral coalition which assured them many more seats than they deserved, were responsible for sectarian persecution and illiberal legislation. Thus excesses lent a bitter tone to the Republic which had been set up under the best of circumstances, by means of a bloodless revolution. The "Law for the Defense of the Republic," which was voted as an appendix to the Constitution, actually vetoed the guarantees accorded to citizens. Movements of revolt on the part of the monarchist Rightists and the anarchist Leftists placed the new-born Republic in a difficult position. It "had alienated large sections of the middle classes without giving satisfaction to the peasants and factory workers," but the Republican parties were more prone to react against their opponents of the Right than their opponents of the Left, thus following the Jacobin tradition.

In the 1933 elections, the Left-wing republicans were defeated by virtue of the lack of unity among republicans and Socialists, and the abstention of the Anarchists. The Right-wing members and the Center gained a parliamentary majority, and the Radical Party played the rôle of a hub, upheld by Gil Robles' party, which sought to nullify the sectarian legislation of the period and closed its eyes to the scandalous financial practices of the Radicals, who in turn were disposed to make any ideological concession, provided that they might remain in power. On October 1, 1934, when President Alcalá Zamora, faced with the resignation of the Radical Government, brought three Right-wing ministers into the new cabinet, the extreme Leftists, and even some parties who proclaimed themselves Republicans, as for instance the Socialists, rose up in arms in Catalonia and especially in the Asturias. Brenan is quite right in asserting that the scotching of that rebellion with Moorish troops and the Foreign Legion was "the first battle of the Civil War." The destructive and homicidal fury of this uprising was followed by the cold and equally homicidal fury of military, political and judicial repressions, which definitely poisoned the relations between the various social groups, thereafter separated by an abyss of resentment.

The natural consequence of such blundering politics was the electoral triumph in February,

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1936, of the Popular Front. Its propaganda platform had been amnesty for all the persecuted Leftists of the October, 1934, revolution. The Radicals and the Rightists were now frustrated. Like the preceding elections, this one was lost by the Government and won by the men who had been clapped in jail, in good Hispanic tradition, for the Spaniards are always inspired by an innate anarchistic sentiment against those in power, and at the same time by a generous, quixotic impulse toward those who are suffering. But the Leftists did not know how to be victorious and the Rightists did not know how to lose. The ousting of Alcalá Zamora from the Presidency of the Republic was the first revolutionary act of the new Parliament. Popular uprisings and criminal reprisals by groups of Anarchists and Socialists on the one hand and the Falange on the other, almost constantly ignored the scant authority of the Government. Partisans disobeyed the Government, and its opponents violently attacked it. The greater part of the army was in favor of the rebellion, with the Falangists and Carlists inciting to it. The workers' parties were preparing for the final clash, and when the military insurrection took place, in July, 1936, the Government found itself stranded between subversive forces. It decided its only recourse was to arm the popular masses which had been so unruly during the preceding months—and thus the new Republican Army was formed. A struggle for mastery then ensued between the Socialist and Anarchist union organizations and the Communist Party, whose ranks were reinforced by the Socialist youth groups now under its control. The Falange constituted the main ideological nucleus of insurrection, and soon Franco and his generals took over. They accepted the program of fascism and replaced the republican state by the "national-syndicalist" totalitarian state. In both camps the terror was even more violent and dreadful than the war. It was a terror of crazed masses and of revolutionary organizations in the government camp. And in the nationalist camp it was a less spectacular, but a most methodically conducted terror. Throughout the civil war, and even afterward, each group tried to impress upon the world the conviction that it was the opposite side which was committing all the atrocities—Spain's great dishonor. Actually, both sides were guilty of equal cruelty, although the responsibility is more direct and concrete on Franco's side, and more diffused and unsystematic on the Republican.

Foreign intervention by Italy, Germany and Russia contributed to aggravate the situation and to prolong the war. The Spaniards themselves would not have been able to keep it going for three years. The democratic states, in their nearsightedness, were accomplices to the shameful farce of the "Committee of Non-Intervention," and thus made possible this proving ground for the world war which was to follow. This was done at the expense of the Spanish people. The shame could have been put to an end if the democracies had effected some concerted diplomatic actions to eliminate foreign participation and to bring about reconciliation among the Spaniards. What this would have meant for the world, they have realized—too late.

And now the Spanish labyrinth continues to be as intricate and puzzling as at the end of the Civil War. Franco and his followers have not seen fit to be generous. His victory by force has been maintained by terror, and most precariously. The prisons and concentration camps are overflowing with condemned people and with mere suspects. The spirit of vengeance and the desire for revenge are taking hold of too many Spanish hearts, whose wounds are still open. If practically all of the bishops and a great many clergymen of the Spanish church had not embraced the cause of dictatorship by demonstrating their moral belligerence throughout the fratricidal struggle, the Church might have played a rôle of pacification; but that great opportunity was let slip by those most obligated to serve the religion of love.

Some Spaniards stake their hopes on the restoration of outworn institutions. Others dream of a return to a past immediately preceding the Civil War. They do not realize that if there is any adhesiveness to the present régime—which the majority of Spaniards detest—it springs from the fact that most Spaniards are horrified at the possibility of the dogmatic excesses of the parties of the extreme Left and fear a new slaughter in revenge for the bloody repressions continued by Franco. This would merely perpetuate the succession of vengefulness, with one side alternately replacing the other, until Spain is torn to pieces.

Does this mean that there is no solution? On the contrary. Experience shows that the exit from the labyrinth is in none of the routes so far attempted. Neither dictatorship by the Right or the Left, nor monarchy, nor anarchy, nor fascism, nor communism. The love of the Spaniards for liberty is much greater than their ability to administer it. But if they were to achieve the only necessary restoration, that of acquiring the ability to feel as a national community, after a certain convalescent period (during which the support of the free nations would be essential) the Spaniards themselves could democratically give their nation a régime of civil tolerance based on respect for differences and a relaxation of oppositions. This would be, through mutual effort at understanding and generosity, the most fertile revolution imaginable, yet possible. In obtaining some notion of the elements in Spain which must work out a solution, Mr. Brenan's book is a most useful guide.

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# *Lord Acton*

## Appraisal of a great nineteenth century figure

Cuthbert Wright

JOHN EMERICH DALBERG, Baron Acton, had a distinguished ancestry and connection in England and Germany alike. Descended from an ancient German house, his grandfather had been prime minister of the Bourbon Kingdom of Naples in Napoleon's time, and his relation to good society in England was widened by his mother's marriage to Lord Granville, whom he accompanied to the coronation of the Czar Alexander II. As a Catholic in those distant days, Acton could enter neither of the national universities, and was mainly educated at Munich, living six years in the house of Dr. Döllinger, then considered the brightest ornament of Catholic learning in Europe. In Germany, Acton was saddened by the contrast between the seething intellectual life of that country, represented by such men as Ranke and Harnack, and anything of the sort in the narrow Catholic circle of his own land. With the single exception of the cautious and suspect Lingard, Catholic scholarship simply did not exist in the England of Acton's youth, at any rate, in the field of historical studies.

This was not wholly the fault of Catholics. The residue of the Penal Laws had cut them off from university life, as it had Acton, and when the last barriers were removed by a Liberal government, the fierce ultramontane zeal of such leaders as Manning discouraged Catholic attendance at Oxford or Cambridge. It is curious that nineteenth century bigotry in England should have been mainly the work of converts—Manning, Ward, Faber—men who were in the best position to appreciate the better side of non-Catholic life. Newman is the great exception to this rule, and the insidious opposition of the bigots to his going back to his beloved Oxford almost broke his heart.

If Catholic scholarship is an important force in England today, and, to some degree, in the United States, no one is more responsible for the change than Acton himself. That was his life-work. In a series of magazines—the *Rambler,* the *Home and Foreign Review,* etc.—he raised Catholic scholarship like a battle-banner that could be turned triumphantly in two directions—against the misunderstanding and intolerance of the Church by Protestants, and against the Catholic champions of abuses, the apologists of the Inquisition, for example. There can be no doubt that Acton came to think of the second direction as being more important than the first. He planned an immense history of freedom through the ages. Human liberty was only a little less dear to him than his religion, and to some extent, he made of liberty a religious cult like a man of 1793. "Both liberty and religion," he said, "have become the great motives of the best actions and the worst crimes." Hence, if the Inquisition has its apologists, so has the Terror—Michelet, Louis Blanc. In the field of history extremes meet, and bigots of apparently opposite camps will always understand each other. Up to his fall in Thermidor, Robespierre had no better supporters than the priests he protected against the de-Christianizers. Christ's great sentence: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," seemed to Acton the supreme charter of human freedom. Every reign of terror, Red or White, has come about because that precept has been ignored or denied.

By the year 1864, the patience of the Roman authorities was exhausted, and Acton, with his customary correctness, suppressed his review. But if obedient, he was not hypocritically obedient, and the last number of the magazine carries this sentence: "My principles do not cease to be true, nor does the authority that condemns them cease to be legitimate because the two are in contradiction." Had Lamennais or Father Tyrell written that, they might have died in the arms of Rome. The Vatican remained unconvinced of Acton's good faith, and of Newman's, a contributor to the *Rambler,* till a better day dawned with the election of Leo XIII in the Eighties. "He is not a Catholic *di cuore* (at heart)," Pio Nono had said of Acton. But Leo made Newman a cardinal, and Acton became Regius Professor of History at Cambridge, the place from which his religion had barred him in boyhood.

Protestant fears of a Catholic in such a chair were certainly not realized. (Imagine a Protestant occupying a similar post in the Catholic University of America!) "In judging men and things" (that is, in judging historically), he wrote the Anglican Bishop Creighton, *"Ethics* go before dogma, politics and nationality." At Cambridge, he worked out his plan for the "Cambridge Modern History," which still bears his name as editor.



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The same ideal of rigid impartiality which distinguished his editorship of the *Rambler* and professorship is obvious in the great Cambridge tomes. "We shall avoid the needless utterance of opinion or service to special causes," he wrote. In other words, nobody would be able to tell, without consulting an index, where Cardinal Gasquet laid down his pen, and Frederick Harrison, the disciple of Auguste Comte, took it up. This ideal has caused a certain absence of personal color in the "C.M.H.," but has also resulted in an almost flawless reliability.

The editors of the Catholic Encyclopedia committed the error of assigning its note on Acton to a Jesuit. "Lord Acton never produced anything that deserved to be called a book," writes the Reverend Herbert Thurston, "but he, occasionally, wrote an article or lecture." Thus the parasol patronizes the royal sceptre! Acton's single essays are packed with the learning and rich substance of a dozen books. His "Lectures on the French Revolution" are the finest study of that movement known to me except Carlyle's, which are, after all, poetic narrative rather than history. Great contemporaries evidently valued Acton better than the Reverend Herbert Thurston. Abroad his company was sought by Taine and Renan no less than by the Duc de Broglie and Monseigneur Dupenloup. "We must ask Lord Acton," the four-times Premier, Gladstone, would say when anything intricate came up. When he died in 1902, his glorious library, assembled since the age of 33, was bought by the American trillionaire, Carnegie, who at once presented it intact to Cambridge, the university that Acton had served so well.

When Creighton's fourth volume of "The History of the Papacy" appeared, dealing with the pontiffs of the Renaissance, there had been a strange little controversy between Acton and the industrious and good-humored Anglican prelate. Acton's moral sense, it seems, was outraged. "You ignore," he wrote the Bishop, "you even deny, at least implicitly, the existence of the torture chamber and the stake. . . . We Liberals think persecution a worse crime than adultery, and the acts done by Ximenes considerably worse than the entertainment of Roman courtesans by Alexander VI. . . . You say that people in authority are not to be snubbed or sneered at from our pinnacle of conscious rectitude. I really don't know whether you exempt them because of their rank, or of their success and power, or of their date." Creighton's answer to this diatribe appears inadequate. To tell the truth, his imagination was not deeply touched by the atrocities of the Inquisition; what mainly interested him were the temporal difficulties of the ecclesiastical ruler like Alexander or Leo X. He himself was only too familiar with such difficulties, surrounded as he was in his London diocese by malignant ritualists on one hand and bawling Low Churchmen on the other. Yet it is highly rejoicing to note the Catholic historian calling down fire from Heaven on the heads of unworthy popes, while the Anglican prelate blandly excuses them. The spectacle might well have tickled the humor of Pope Alexander in person.

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It is now time to present Acton's fundamental point of view in his historical studies. As firmly as Pio Nono himself, he held that "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In other words, Acton was a convinced and candid Catholic who, as he said when menaced with excommunication after the Vatican Council, "would rather die than live out of communion with Rome." If he wore his Rome with a difference, as Strachey said, the point of the difference lies in the word "candid." Christ promised his Church that the gates of hell should not prevail ultimately, but there have been moments in history when they certainly appeared to prevail temporarily. "It makes all the difference," said Archbishop Whately, "whether you are disposed to give *truth* the first or the second place." In Acton's opinion, the average Catholic writer and teacher was all too disposed to sacrifice truth about the past to a smug and disingenuous discretion in the present. The Evil Spirit can attempt to undermine the Church from within just as the Holy Ghost directs it, ultimately, from above. For Acton, the Evil Spirit was, especially and undeniably, the demon of religious intolerance. Ever since Constantine (or even earlier) that spirit had been at work. The addresses of Saint John in the Apocalypse to the seven churches of Asia are franker documents than can be found in any average manual of Catholic Church History written in Acton's time, to say nothing of our own. Certain dubious doctrines with which the Church has flirted in the past can hardly be justified, either by Scripture or by tradition. The divine right of kings, extolled by Bossuet, was an invention of Luther. Absolute monarchy—the system of Louis XIV and Bonaparte—has proved the greatest enemy, not only of the Catholic spirit, but of the Roman Papacy itself. For the average Catholic historian, especially one who writes at second hand what he has learned from others, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was a political crime, fostered by one or two royal miscreants, the Queen-Mother, the Duc d'Anjou. For Acton, the master of his research, it was also a religious crime, done with the connivance and approval of religious authority, one of the sweetest achievements of the demon of religious bigotry. It will be acknowledged as such only "when men perceive that truth is the one merit that gives dignity and worth to history." Meanwhile, the history pupils of one generation,

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imbibing the official version of such crimes, become the history teachers of the next generation; the poison continues; the demon is satisfied.

"On his death-bed," writes Lord Acton's son who inherited his title, "he adjured me not to judge others as rashly as he had done . . . but to take care to make allowance for human weakness." It is indeed a solemn warning, not only to the Actons, but to their adversaries, and especially to ourselves. Is it not, at least, conceivable, that the apostle of absolute truth discerned, in that ultimate hour, that absolute truth may be a relative truth in this world, and was loyal to the last?

# Margery Kempe of Lynn

HELEN C. WHITE

MUCH of the exhilaration of reading history is due to the fact that so often one views the world through the eyes of the exceptional human being, the signally gifted and effective personality. But that very selectivity of history is also a cause of unnecessary estrangement. The very splendor of history widens the breach between the dramatic past and the commonplace present. For that reason the record of the humbler, more average person possesses a value and an interest out of proportion to his place in society, simply because it is apt to present a more familiar and therefore accessible world than that of the greater person.

That is why so much interest attaches to a work like the "Book of Margery Kempe."* It was completed in the middle of the fifteenth century, but except for a few extracts printed in the sixteenth century, it was not published until 1940, when two distinguished American scholars, Mr. Sanford Brown Meech and Miss Hope Emily Allen, completed an edition with much admirable supplementary material of a linguistic, historical and religious character for the Early English Text Society. "The Book" is the spiritual autobiography of a small-town, middle-class English woman who was born about 1373 and died some time after 1438. Her father was several times mayor of Lynn, and her husband seems to have been one of the representative citizens and business men of the same town. She herself has no claim to fame but the book which she is said to have dictated.

In some ways Margery Kempe might be taken as a fairly typical woman of her time and class. She was married when she was about twenty, and had fourteen children. She made two attempts at setting up a business for herself—brewing and a horse-mill—and in both she was unsuccessful. She was quite illiterate, and though she made several pilgrimages, notably one to the Holy Land, she was entirely lacking in any knowledge of or interest in the world of larger and more impersonal interests and movements. She played no part in the important events of her time, and it is not possible to say that she made any particular contribution to the larger life of the age.

But in one respect she did reach out beyond her own narrow world into something larger and of more lasting interest, and that was in her religious life. For as Miss Allen has so abundantly made clear, Margery Kempe belongs to that contemporary development of feminine religious devotion, of certain aspects of which Joan of Arc is the most famous representative, and of others, Catherine of Siena the greatest. This bourgeois housewife of Lynn is not, of course, to be compared as a person or an influence to those really great women. But in her degree she is of their kind, both in her complete devotion to a very intense and personal communion with her God, and in the visionary and revelatory consequences of that relationship. She is like them, too, in the variety of reactions she inspired, and though she was never to know anything like the tragedy of the one, or the triumph of the other, she had basically the same orientation as they. Her experience she saw as a revelation of the goodness of God, which it was her duty to share in order that others might be brought to a livelier realization of that goodness and so to their salvation. Miss Allen is quite right in finding in her experience a real core of genuine mysticism. The classic stages of mystical awakening and growth are clearly to be discerned, the relations between vocal and mental prayer, between meditation and contemplation, even between the devotion to the manhood and the godhead of Christ are clearly realized, and in its main lines her experience is definitely in accord with that of the great mystics.

As a matter of fact, as Miss Allen has so well pointed out, for all her illiteracy, she was by no means uninstructed in the contemplative life. She had had read to her by an enthusiastic priest-supporter some of the classics of contemplation like the "Stimulus Amoris," then ascribed to Bonaventura, Walter Hilton's "Scale of Perfection," the "Incendium Amoris" of Richard Rolle and the famous "Book of Revelations" of Saint Bridget of Sweden. She had the privilege of talking with a really great mystic, Julian of Norwich, and she had some contact with people who had known Saint Bridget, to say nothing of other possible opportunities for knowledge of the Flemish and German mysticism of the time. She had a real thirst for wisdom in these things as may be seen from her passion for sermons and her love of conference with learned men. And she had, moreover, within certain limitations, a very good mind. The way in which she gave a satisfactory account

* Oxford. $6.50.

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of her faith at her various trials for suspicion of heresy shows that. She knew how to hew to the line of theological argument, how to make the central declarations that established her orthodoxy on points which the heretics of the time had brought into dispute. Although her Scripture was necessarily second-hand, she knew how to use scriptural saying and story effectively. She was quick of wit, and she knew when to leave well enough alone, as the witty so often do not.

And again, as Miss Allen has well pointed out, her story gives a sense of quite simple honesty, and in spite of the admittedly not entirely systematic organization of the biographical data, it is to remarkable degree for such material consistent. Here the essential candor and literalism of Margery's nature serve her well.

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There is no reason, then, to challenge the core of her experience. The difficulty is of another sort, and it is this which makes Margery's case so instructive. The difficulty is to be found in certain personal limitations which affect the account of her experience and her expression of it. In the main these limitations are of two types. The first is to be found in the basic character of her mental and physical make-up. Three elements went into that, an extraordinary sensibility, a complete literalness of imagination, and an unusual physical responsiveness to the impulses of feeling and imagination. The result is that the usual sermon of the time, designed to move the sluggish imagination of the average parishioner to something of a realization of the significance of the Passion, say, produce in Margery an uncontrollable hysteria of crying and weeping. Again, when she knelt before the high altar of Saint Margaret's church to receive Communion, she was visited with such grace that she "cryed so lowde that it myth ben herd al abowte the Chirche & owte of the Chirche." Of course she could not receive the Sacrament in such a state; so the priest turned again to the altar and waited until her crying had abated. Perhaps most dramatically of all, the sight of the priests and others kneeling with torches about the Sepulchre on a Good Friday so moved her that she "sobbyd, roryd, & cryed, and, spredyng hir armys a-brood, seyd wyth lowde voys, 'I dey, I dey.'"

It is not difficult to imagine what the reaction of a modern congregation would be to such behavior. Apparently the reaction of at least a considerable portion of the medieval was not much different. They "wonderyd & merueyled what hir eyled." Her companions on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem were apparently so much mortified by her behavior that when they reached Venice, they refused to keep her in their company any longer, a pretty drastic, not to say cruel, step when it is realized what it meant to turn a lone woman adrift in a strange land. But one cannot deny a certain amount of sympathy to those honest burgesses who after a hard day of sightseeing had had to put up with Margery's persistent talk of holy things and weeping thereupon at table.

The clergy apparently had more endurance. Like most nuisances, Margery held very high ideals for other people's behavior. The proper pattern for a preacher in her eyes was clearly that of the doctor of divinity who, when she began to weep and cry out, stopped his sermon and waited in silence "wol mekely" until she had finished her crying, and then in the afternoon sent for her and "mad her rith glad cher" and told her that he would not have spoken against her even if she had cried until evening. Probably not many reached that high level of patience, but according to Margery, only one, a Grey Friar, went so far as to preach against her, and him she naturally counted an arch-enemy.

The patience of the clergy with the pious in any age is taken for granted, but the disturbance of the whole congregation was not something to be taken lightly, even by clerical tolerance. The explanation is probably that the clergy were familiar with what Miss Allen appropriately terms the liturgical use of tears, and hesitated to risk obstructing Grace. For Margery here as in other aspects of her devotional life, was following in her own degree and capacity a great religious tradition, that of worship by weeping. Again, she was very well oriented. Her tears were the highest gift of God, bestowed, as God Himself once told her, for a variety of purposes, to show His love for her, to awe the people with the grace given her, to make known His mother's sorrow for His suffering and awaken the people's compassion for it, to give profitable example to sinners of the benefit for salvation of sorrow for the Passion, and to blunt for Margery herself the pain of dying by a foretaste of it. Her tears ministered torments to the Devil, and drink to angels. The potency of these tears seems to have been acknowledged, for people asked her to weep for them, and she herself wept for different classes of people as an exercise of charity. She was sensitive to the criticism of the unsympathetic, for she took pains to defend her weeping as a grace she could not withstand and to repeat God's assurance that while it was possible for her to be a hypocrite in saying her beads, she could not be one in her weeping. Indeed, when she found herself unable to weep, she was much distressed. Again, there seems to be no reason to doubt her sincerity, but it would be hard to exaggerate the hysterical extravagance of the result.

Much the same must be said of the terms in which she expresses her mystical experience. At first sight those terms would seem to justify all

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the warnings given before her time and after as to the perils of too personal and too sensuous devotion. There is certainly more than a suggestion of vanity and petty egotism and self-assertiveness about a good many passages. But in the total impression, it is the pettiness, the personalness and the literalness of the terms that are seen to be at fault. Margery skates on some very thin ice in her vulgarization of great mystical symbolism, but here, as in her theologizing, she shows surprising ability to keep her head. She is protected at once by her virtues and her limitations, her honesty, her literalness, her complete lack of originality. What is wrong is really very simple. For all her intelligence and very considerable practical sense, Margery had cultivated only one of her very considerable variety of gifts, her sensibility, and that in very personal terms. She lived, as we have seen, in a very limited world of highly personal relations and interests. She knew no other. Moreover, she herself had no tendency whatsoever to speculation or to any form of abstract thought. Her notions of symbolism were of the crudest. For her natural endowment in this region was commonplace, and she had enjoyed no opportunities of cultivation or discipline. The surprising thing is not that her revelations were petty and egotistical, but that they kept so firmly this side of dangerous nonsense. A certain rough soundness of taste seems to have restrained her where the finer faculties were lacking. This fact alone says much for her own soundness and the soundness of the world in which she lived.

There is no question that Margery enjoyed the excitement which she stirred up and the attention which she received. When she was thoroughly in possession of herself, she was clearly a charming woman with a gift of engaging conversation. She could always tell a good story. In another time and world she might have been a popular novelist with some pretensions to edification. The book which she sincerely believed would spread the tidings of the goodness of God, and which she clearly hoped might even help to establish her sanctity, is likely to prove of real value to the student of her times in other ways. It gives homely and vivid insight into the popular religious thought and practice and feeling of the period. As Miss Allen will show in her promised study of Margery's relations to the mystical traditions of her time, it affords very valuable evidence as to the dissemination and development of religious influences both in England and abroad. It throws a good deal of incidental light on interesting problems of the cultural history of England for the next two centuries, such as, for instance, the relations between radical religious views and feminism, the revolt of the unlearned, the breach between layman and cleric, the breaking forth of the inner light, the reaction against enthusiasm and fanaticism, the whole effort to avert revolution and promote reform. Indeed, the student of sixteenth and seventeenth century English religious life will find the seeds of many of his problems in this book.

As for the reader of the present day who approaches the book without historical preoccupations, he will doubtless find much in it to confirm the current suspicion of mysticism, and he can hardly be blamed. But he should not forget what a really great mystic, Saint John of the Cross, once said, "God is a well from which everyone may draw water according to the measure of his vessel." Margery's was small, but she was drawing from the right well. To the present reader in this year of grace, 1943, her story suggests rather two widespread needs of her day, not unknown in ours, the provision of constructive ways of using surplus feminine energy and the promotion of steady, lifelong education of all aspects of the religious being, of mind, feeling and imagination, as well as will.

# *Books to Give*

*By* The Editors

PAPER SHORTAGES and cloth shortages and other wartime difficulties have done something to cut down the number of books published this fall, and an eager buying public has helped the confusion by making is very hard for both bookstores and publishers to keep the books there are in stock. And don't think you can identify a volume by the color of its binding! The same book is being put out in all sorts of different colors, depending on what cloth the publisher can get. Indeed a volume on the navy gave its publishers a nightmare because the first thousand copies were all neatly bound in khaki, and not a scrap of navy blue was obtainable. So it is wise to make your list from what your bookseller has rather than trying too hard to get exactly what you want—especially if you want any best sellers.

Is it a note of our success in Latin America, by the way, that last year's flood of books on this subject has dwindled to a trickle? Not that it matters, but the fact is hereby recorded anyway.

Of course we cannot make any claim that the lists which follow include every good book published this fall, but every book listed has been examined by one of the editors or by some reviewer for THE COMMONWEAL in whom we place confidence.

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*Fiction*—This has been a poor year for American fiction. The number of good novels is in fact so small that it is only by bringing in some new editions of classics and minor classics which have recently appeared that an adequate division of this Christmas book list can be devoted to fiction. Perhaps the most striking single volume for gift purposes in this category is an illustrated edition of W. H. Hudson's highly romantic "Green Mansions." (Knopf. $6.00). Appropriately enough, the artist who has provided thirteen pages in color and a score of headpieces in black and white, Horatio Butler, is like Mr. Hudson a native of the Argentine. Another interesting new edition is the collection of tales, "What Men Live By," by Leo Tolstoy—the Aylmer Maude translation—(Pantheon. $2.50). One of the most useful ventures of the year for those who are devotees of the able author of "A Passage to India" is the publication in this country of E. M. Forster's novels: "Howard's End" (Knopf. $2.50); "The Longest Journey" (New Directions. $1.00); "A Room With A View" (New Directions. $1.00); "Where Angels Fear to Tread" (Knopf. $2.50).

Perhaps the most impressive novel dealing with the modern American scene is Alexander Saxton's "Grand Crossing" (Harpers. $2.50). It is largely the story of a quest for what makes life worth living by a young man who is so pure of heart that he maintains his integrity among the most sordid surroundings. He is a well-to-do young man who "goes to the people" in true Russian fashion. This is a first novel and consequently at times uneven, but it is passionately sincere and is occasionally quite poetic. "Taps For Private Tussie," by Jesse Stuart (Dutton. $2.50), deals with a special group of Americans, the inhabitants of the Kentucky hills. It has much the same flavor as Mr. Stuart's COMMONWEAL sketches, this time emphasizing the delights of living one's whole life without ever raising a finger. Florida of the 1880's is the scene of the delightful little novel "The Barefoot Mailman," by Theodore Pratt (Duell. $2.50). Also happily in lighter vein is Mary O'Hara's "Thunderhead" (Lippincott. $2.75), which can be recommended for all lovers of horses. Extremely moving is Bucklin Moon's striking novel about Harlem and the Negro problem, "The Darker Brother" (Doubleday. $2.50).

One of the most charming novels of the whole group is Sylvia Leao's "White Shore of Olinda" (Vanguard. $2.50). It is a tale of simple and courageous fisher folk in far off Brazil. Even more distant India is the scene of Christine Weston's "Indigo" (Scribners. $2.50), an able novel which poignantly conveys the effects of British racial contempt upon sensitive people in India. The story unfolds largely through young people, French, English and Indian; it is superbly told. One of the most impressive historical novels of the year, for those who like that sort of thing, is Louis Zara's "Against This Rock" (Creative Age. $2.75), a story of Charles V. "The Apostle," by Sholem Asch (Putnam. $3.00), is a fictionalized life of Saint Paul, written with great intensity and feeling. Mr. Asch, of course, does not belong to any Christian church, and hence his interpretation is in many ways unorthodox, but his book should be of deep interest to persons well versed in the New Testament. Irina Aleksander's "The Running Tide" (Duell. $2.50) gives an appealing account of what the young Soviet élite are now like.

*Biographies*—Again this year American publishers seem to have done their best work in authoritative and

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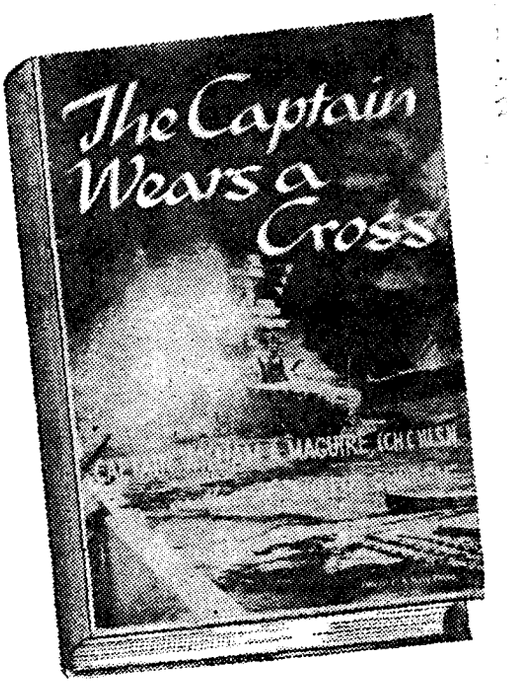


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popular biographies. Consequently they constitute a most promising list from which to select Christmas gift books.

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WALT WHITMAN, AN AMERICAN. Henry Seidel Canby. Houghton. $3.75. A competent, understanding study of the great American poet.

CRUSADE FOR PAN-EUROPE. Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi. Putnam. $3.50. The autobiography of an aristocrat from Central Europe, with wide political implications. The chapter on his father appeared before publication in THE COMMONWEAL this September.

JAN SMUTS. F. A. Crafford. Doubleday. $3.50. The history of our times as seen in the career of South Africa's dictatorial leading statesman. A life filled with adventure and decisions of great historical moment.

NAPOLEON III. Albert Guérard. Harvard. $3.50. A competent, highly personal study which tends to rehabilitate somewhat the memory of the lesser Napoleon.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS. Edward R. Hewitt. Duell. $3.00. Charming reminiscences of Peter Cooper and New York of the past seventy years.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER. Rackham Holt. Doubleday. $3.50. In many ways this life of a great Negro scientist is the most appealing biography of the year, for Dr. Carver not only contributed a wealth of practical knowledge for the welfare of his race and of mankind but he himself was a most lovable figure.

THE LITTLE LOCKSMITH. Katharine Butler Hathaway. Coward-McCann. $2.50. The poignant autobiography of a woman who, from childhood, was crippled in body but not in spirit.

WHERE LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP DWELT. Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes. Dodd. $3.00. A second volume of the reminiscences of Hilaire Belloc's engaging sister.

THE DESIRE TO PLEASE. Harold Nicolson. Harcourt. $3.50. The life of Archibald Hamilton Rowan and many sidelights on Anglo-Irish history.

MEMOIRS OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN. Albert Jay Nock. Harper. $3.00. A provocative study filled with epigrams and sharp insights by the author of "Our Enemy the State."

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO. Cesare Orsenigo. Herder. $3.50. A readable life of one of the most saintly and forceful figures of the whole Counter-Reformation.

THIS MAN RIBBENTROP. Paul Schwarz. Messner. $3.00. This volume gives a good idea how Nazi leaders get that way.

BURMA SURGEON. Gordon S. Seagrave. Norton. $3.00. An admirable account of one of the heroes in our present war.

DIMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH. Seroff and Shohat. Knopf. $3.00. Letters play a large part in this account of the life of the great Soviet composer.

THE LIBERAL MIND OF JOHN MORLEY. Warren Stabler. Princeton. $3.50. A clear-headed and informative study of a noble English rationalist.

YANKEE LAWYER. The Autobiography of Ephraim Tutt. Scribners. $3.50. For those who follow Arthur Train's stories in the *Saturday Evening Post*.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON. Maisie Ward. Sheed. $4.50. A good deal of firsthand material dealing primarily with the life, trials and literary friendships of a hugely lovable champion of Christendom.

***Anthologies***—A few of the collections of various kinds published during the year make rather good gifts. Some of them tend toward the lighter side. Except for the effusions of Mabel Dodge Luhan about D. H. Lawrence and friends, George Sessions Perry's "Southwest Round-Up" (Whittlesey. $3.00) is a happy aggregation of short stories, biographical sketches and—to a lesser extent—excerpts from novels. "Best American Short Stories—'43" edited by Martha Foley (Houghton. $2.75) is an attractive selection this year. One of the most unusual in this group, and not too far out of the news either, is George Korson's "Coal Dust on the Fiddle" (Pennsylvania. $3.50). A group of ballads and songs about miners and coal mining interspersed with accounts of some of the most terrible disasters in this dangerous calling. A book with real flavor which even includes a "John L. Lewis Blues." For those who know their American literature and revel in it, it would be hard to find anything more suitable than Edmund Wilson's "Shock of Recognition" (Doubleday. $5.00), a compilation of what leading American writers thought of each other and what the others were writing at the time. Perhaps the most important volumes in this category are "A Treasury of Russian Life and Humor," edited by John Cournos (Coward-McCann. $3.75), and "The Triumph of Life," edited by Horace Gregory (Viking. $2.50), which are reviewed in considerable detail in the "Editors' Choice" section of this issue.

***History*** supplies a fair quota of the season's books. Here are a few titles of exceptional interest:

HISTORY OF BIGOTRY IN THE UNITED STATES. Gustavus Myers. Random. $3.50. A magnificent job which every thoughtful Catholic should read.

THE UNITED STATES. E. A. Benians. Cambridge-Macmillan. $1.25. A chance to see ourselves as others see us is always good for the inflated ego; here is a brief British view of our history.

LAND OF THE GREAT IMAGE. Maurice Collis. Knopf. $3.00. A charming backwater of history—seventeenth century Portuguese India—charmingly illustrated.

OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH BY CENTURIES. Joseph McSorley. Herder. $7.50. Very handy as a reference book, and good to give people who need such a volume professionally. Admirable in every way.

THE ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. John C. Miller. Little. $3.50. Another reappraisal of a subject which has had more than its share of reappraising. Well done.

MAKERS OF MODERN STRATEGY. Edited by Edward Mead Earle. Princeton. $3.75. Careful studies of all the great military theorists for the last several centuries—fine to give someone really interested in military matters.

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE. D. W. Brogan. Knopf. $3.00. A very successful British attempt at self-revelation.

LEE'S LIEUTENANTS (Volume 2). Douglass Southall Freeman. Scribner. $5.00. Another volume by a great historian and biographer.

THE SOUL OF RUSSIA. Helen Iswolsky. Sheed. $2.50. A brilliant attempt to lay bare the mainsprings of the Russian mind and heart through her religious heroes and saints.

NEW ZEALAND. Walter Nash. Duell. $3.50. The Prime Minister of that dominion tells us all about her achievements as a model of social progressiveness.

THE RUSSIAN ENIGMA. William Henry Chamberlin. Scribner. $2.75. A journalist who is no admirer of the Soviet system tries to solve a puzzle.

***The American Scene.*** It is quite natural that a nation at war, especially when that war has ideological aims as well as aims of self-interest, should manifest some interest in its soul, if one may by analogy attribute a soul to a collectivity. There have been a host of books on this general theme, of which a handful are worth listing and

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**C-7.** **JOURNEY AMONG WARRIORS**—Eve Curie. Because of her family background and her own writings, Miss Curie found that she was well known wherever she went on her tour of the fighting fronts. Thus, in many places, she was allowed to see more of the front than other foreign correspondents. **$3.50**

**C-8.** **GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON**—Maisie Ward. Maisie Ward was given all the family papers; relatives and friends collaborated. Here are Gilbert and Frances Chesterton from childhood. Here is the story of Chesterton's youth, his Diary showing his theological development before he came to know Catholics, the travels and friends of his mature years. **$4.50**

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provide good pick-me-ups for the discouraged. "Main Street," by Hamilton Basso (Reynal, $2.50), is in this category, dealing principally with the question, "What is an American?" Donald Culross Peattie's "Journey into America" (Houghton, $3.00) picks twenty episodes from our past in which the author finds an "area of freedom." "The American" (James Truslow Adams, Scribner, $3.00) is a more systematic attempt at historical analysis and classification. . . . Self-consciousness about our race problem grows more and more acute. Thoughtful Americans everywhere seem concerned about it, and several excellent books are available. Father LaFarge has completely re-written an earlier book and made something far more definitive—"The Race Question and the Negro" (Longmans, $2.50). This is far and away the best specifically Catholic treatment of the subject. And the best book by a Negro in quite some time is Roi Ottley's history of Harlem, "New World a'Coming" (Houghton, $3.00). It is colorful and very readable. . . . A good treatment of the small farmer, a crucially important class in our population which we all too cavalierly assume will go on existing forever, no matter how much abused, is "Roots in the Earth" (P. Alston Waring and Walter Magnus Teller, Harper, $2.50).

### *Belles Lettres*

In the absence of any special poetry section we list "Four Quartets," by T. S. Eliot (Harcourt. $2.00) under Belles Lettres. It does not matter where one lists it, for all that one need say is that it is the major creative writing of the year. With profound echoes of Catholic metaphysics, Bergson, Dante, and close to man's persistent meditation on the problem of Time, this is a moving and beautiful work. It is not fair, perhaps, to place "Western Star," Stephen Vincent Benét (Farrar. $2.00) next to "Four Quartets" but Mr. Benét has left Americans a poem about the early days of their country which has descriptive eloquence and generous emotion. A still earlier America is magnificently described in "Medieval American Art," Pál Kelemen (Macmillan. $22.50). There is a volume of text and one of very remarkable photographs of the architecture, statuary, painting and minor arts of the earliest civilizations we know about on this continent. James A. Porter, in "Modern Negro Art" (Dryden. $3.25) shows the contributions made by Negroes to the history of American painting, sculpture and architecture. The numerous illustrations show that the work of Negroes can be judged simply and fairly in the general framework of American production without any needless reference to their race. There are three books on music. The flamboyant and popular conductor Leopold Stokowski writes "Music For All of Us" (Simon and Schuster. $2.50) and when he is not carried away by a verbose and mystical approach to music he describes instruments, forms, a multitude of technical aspects of music in a popular and interesting manner. "The Music Lover's Handbook," edited by Elie Siegmeister (Morrow. $4.00) excellently conforms to its title. "The History of Music in Performance," Frederick Dorian (Norton. $4.00) treats of an aspect of music as interesting to the dilletante as to the performer: the way music has been played and sung since the Rennaissance. Two European writers have been given critical comment: "E. M. Forster," Lionel Trilling (New Directions. $1.50) is a brilliant analysis of the English novelist; "Flower of Evil," Edward Morgan (Sheed. $3.00) is a sympathetic life of the prodigious Baudelaire. No one could possibly imagine what Baudelaire would have thought of "Lines and Times of Archie and Mehitabel," Don Marquis (Doubleday. $2.50). We who take enduring pleasure in this charming lunacy would very much like to know.

### *Politics*

REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION OF OUR TIME. Harold J. Laski (Viking. $3.50). The provocative London professor continues to scintillate to some people's pleasure and to other people's great annoyance.

PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE. Edited by Harry C. Koenig (Bruce. $7.50). Mr. Laski may or may not find these principles illuminating. They represent, however, an enduring monument to the wisdom and charity of the Popes. Civilization cannot exist without harkening to them.

THE NEW EUROPE. Bernard Newman. (Macmillan. $3.75). The author has traveled everywhere and all the questions of European frontiers are treated with active sympathy for those whose fate they affect. Highly recommended for interest.

THE AIR FUTURE. Burnet Hershey. (Duell. $2.75). Here is the whole question of the much discussed freedom of the air, the reasons for its necessity and most convincing arguments against any attempt at imperialism.

THE FRUITS OF FASCISM. Herbert Matthews. (Harcourt. $3.00). Mr. Matthews knows Italy very well. This is an account of the origins of Fascism fair to all concerned, together with the dreary march of a wonderful country to ruin.

THE REPUBLIC. Charles A. Beard. (Viking. $3.00). Stimulating conversations on the growth of our nation. Perhaps they lead nowhere but they parade interesting speculation.

PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION. Michael O'Shaughnessy. (Harper. $2.00). Here is a Catholic layman and a business man who speaks out without any inhibitions his mind on capitalism and capitalists, depressions, unemployment, war and peace. A brave performance.

THE WORLD TODAY SERIES. (Oxford. Each volume, $1.75). These little books continue to be unusually good. Recent volumes are those on "North Africa" "France," "Food and Farming in Postwar Europe." A great deal of information is condensed and ably presented.

BETWEEN TEARS AND LAUGHTER. Lin Yu-tang. (Day. $2.50). Critics generally have turned with fury on this book but no matter how annoying Lin Yu-tang's thesis may be to our complacency, the fact remains that we have not given by our action any complete reassurance to the Far East. The problem of just relations remains entire. It will do no harm to read this angry plea that this problem be considered.

LESSONS OF MY LIFE. Lord Vansittart. (Knopf. $3.00). Here again one may think what one likes of the emotional overtones in the British diplomat's views on Germany. What is not permissible is to assume that vague good-will makes or can make the problem of Germany non-existent. For this reason Lord Vansittart is a useful corrective to uninformed idealism. Moreover, with everyone talking about Vansittartism it is not a bad idea to go to the source and find out precisely what Lord Vansittart actually says.

MEIN KAMPF. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Houghton. $3.50). This is one more attempt to induce us to read the most talked about book and the most unread book we know of. The translation is closer to the original than previous efforts and consequently carries us further into a world where words are used as incantations.

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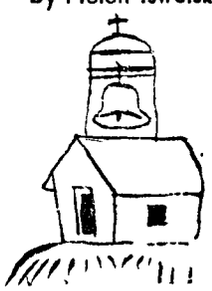

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***Philosophy.*** Jacques Maritain has published three books this year, each models of their kind, and each self-descriptive from the title: "Education at the Crossroads" (Yale, $2.00), "The Rights of Man and the Natural Law" (Scribner, $1.50) and "Art and Poetry" (Philosophical, $1.75). Principally philosophical in its interest—and principally concerned with the philosophy of science—is a novel by C. S. Lewis, author of the best-selling "Screwtape Letters," which is called "Out of the Silent Planet" (Macmillan, $2.00).

***Religion.*** The Newman Bookshop of Westminster, Maryland, has been issuing a number of reprints of unavailable spiritual classics. Among these are: "The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena" ($2.75), "The Abiding Presence of the Holy Ghost in the Soul" (Bede Jarrett, $1.25), "The Life of Saint Theresa of Jesus" ($3.75), "Prayer" (Thomas Verner Moore, $1.75). "Humanism and Theology" by Werner Jaeger is this year's Marquette Lecture and lives up to the high standard set by this series (Marquette, $1.50). C. S. Lewis's "The Case for Christianity" (Macmillan, $1.00) is an admirably lucid statement by a High Church Anglican with which Catholics could disagree only in trivial detail. F. J. Sheed's new translation of the "Confessions" of Saint Augustine (Sheed, $3.00) is by and large excellent and readable. And one of the Maritains' most stimulating briefer works has been made newly available ("Prayer and Intelligence," Sheed, $1.00).

### *War Books*

The real books of the war will be written after the war. The real books about every war have always been written when the fighting was over. Meanwhile there are some excellent accounts of things seen. Ralph Ingersoll's "The Battle Is the Pay-Off" (Harcourt. $2.00) shows the Captain, with all his rhetoric left behind in New York, giving an extremely vivid, technical, but dramatic and human recital of troops fighting in North Africa. Ernie Pyle, "Here Is Your War" (Holt. $3.00) provides an intimate picture of what the soldier thinks when he is far from home with a job to be done. Mr. Pyle's work is human interest at its best. "c/o Postmaster," by Corporal Thomas R. St. George (Crowell. $2.00), is a popular account of military life in Australia; good illustrations and a pleasant manner. Major Francis W. Gerard, "Malta Magnificent" (Whittlesey. $2.50) pays, with considerable vigor, a deserved tribute to that barren, bombed and heroic island. There is one book which is interesting in itself and because it represents an entirely novel form of description. Lieutenant John Mason Brown in "To All Hands" (Whittlesey. $2.75) talks over a ship's intercommunication system to the men who in a battleship do not stand on the bridge, like Nelson, spyglass in hand. He tells them what he sees, explains, comments, often with wit and vividness. His book makes good reading. A young Englishman, Anthony Rhodes, in "Sword of Bone" (Harcourt. $2.50) looks back at the days of the B.E.F. in France during those months of waiting for the advance into Belgium and the retreat from Dunkirk. He is just to the French, just to the British. Because time has passed since the events, he has been able to write a minor, sensitive book and one which will last. We offer no excuses for not listing the innumerable "as told to" books recounting the prowess of our combatants. In general something very horrid stands between the heroism of those who fight and the accounts of their fighting. Or perhaps it is simply an incursion of bad taste.

### *Miscellaneous*

GARDEN ISLANDS OF THE GREAT EAST. David Fairchild. (Scribner. $3.75). A great naturalist describes with enthusiasm the luxuriant and exotic beauties and curiosities of those far distant islands, close now to sorrow and war. Very fine illustrations and a most attractive gift book.

AN IRISH JOURNEY. Sean O'Faolain. (Longmans. $3.50). Another island whose tender countryside and ancient monuments are felicitously described by the novelist and historian. Surprising to the reader this year is such a volume of peaceful memories of a peaceful scene.

LE CREVE-COEUR. Louis Aragon. (Pantheon. $2.00). There is no peace nor any happiness in this volume of magnificent French verse, save the peace and tranquility of sorrow mastered in perfect form. The only great poetry that has been written during the war—at least as far as we know.

WEBSTER'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY. (Merriam. $6.50). Surely this is a most useful dictionary; certainly it is a most fascinating book to leaf through interminably with or without excuse. The famous, the less famous, the infamous are all here. A visit to the cemetery of history with reasonably complete inscriptions on the tombstones. No offense is intended to the many living who are in this volume. It is only a question of time.

PART OF A LIFETIME. Lee Simonson. (Duell. $5.00). A very luxuriously presented account of Mr. Simonson's work in the theater, with many plates of his settings and a self-portrait in color. The stage settings would remind a theater-goer of the past. Rather special gift book for people particularly enthralled by anything connected with the theater.

THE ETERNAL CITY. Desider Holisher. (Ungar. $3.00). Photographs of the Vatican and of many Catholic activities in Rome. The accompanying text is unimportant save when it identifies monuments and scenes. We are grateful for any record of all that is imperiled.

BARNABY. Crockett Johnson. (Holt. $2.00). *PM*'s comic strip artist in book form. There is a sort of whimsical charm in his work which lifts it considerably above that of most cartoonists.

THE MODERN LIBRARY is bringing out a series of illustrated volumes, priced at $1.50. The first volume we have seen is the King James—Protestant—version of the Bible, concerning which naturally we have no comment to make. The second volume is Dostoievsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," and because this is one of the major works in world literature, any comment also is unnecessary. The extremely attractive form of this edition and its remarkably reasonable price suggest that it would be a good thing to follow subsequent volumes.

THURBER'S MEN, WOMEN AND DOGS. Harcourt. $3.00. A whole bookful of the incomparable drawings.

## *The Stage & Screen*

### *The Innocent Voyage*

IT IS difficult to call this more than a dogged adaptation of Richard Hughes' sensitive and disquieting story and I am at a loss to understand the motives behind its production. Certainly the Theater Guild could hardly have hoped to draw a completely non-literary public to a play based on one of the most controversial and admired novels

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published during the last decade or so, and for this reason it is hard to understand how they could have allowed Paul Osborn, the playwright, to finagle as he has done with the characters as well as the intentions of the novelist. Granting, at this period of our cultural development, that there is no escape for the well written, even inevitably written, *book* but to be transferred into other media (stage, films, radio) for the purposes of money, it is again difficult to understand why always the wrong medium is chosen by the idea-boys—a process resulting in a great waste of original excellence, and certainly a great waste of patience on the part of the public. To any thinking playgoer or reader, it is obvious that this story of the accidental kidnapping of a group of children by a number of decadent pirates operating in tropical waters towards the end of the last century, could, with all its moral implications and without loss of integrity and incident, have been interestingly and successfully transferred to the screen. And it is equally obvious that it could *not,* without loss of integrity and incident, be tailored to the stage. And to introduce the mystery of motives again, it is true that the book has been announced on and off by the film companies (at one time as a vehicle for the alarming Abbe children, I believe) for many years, although exactly where that gets us, I don't know. It is simply another fact in the history of a good book gone Broadway at last.

But to return to the play at the Belasco, Mr. Osborne's large discrepancies as its adapter do not, in the main, seem to me as important as his ordinary failure as a playwright and director. To have almost completely rebuilt the character of the Pirate Captain, to have completely changed and redefined the ending of the book, to have re-named and type-cast the children rather than characterizing them, all these I will concede as perhaps the necessary evils of an impossible job. However, his mismanagement of the element of weather does seem to me ridiculous since the weather is, after all, the chief motivating force of the story and certainly the reason for its beginning if not of its end. Nevertheless, nowhere in the play are we made aware of the round sun, the beating heat, the high wind, the sudden storm indigenous to these waters, all of which meteorological data must surely determine the tempo and quality of the scenes under display, and even the temperament of the protagonists. I think if Mr. Osborne had even partially understood the importance of these elements, not only would he have chosen his incidents differently, but he would have divided his play differently, and directed and set it differently as well. Or, most important of all, he would have left it bound in its book exactly where it belongs. I do not mean by this analysis to accuse Mr. Osborne of dishonesty as a writer but rather of miscomprehension, although perhaps the latter epithet is the more damaging of the two. In any case, it is a miscomprehension which has certainly resulted in a contrived, creaking, stuffed production of a mis-titled play.

Regarding performance, it is a little difficult accurately to estimate the actors' interpretation of characters in which one cannot believe; however I thought Oscar Homolka, Herbert Berghof and Ralph Cullinan as assorted mariners (legal and illegal) all acquitted themselves handsomely. The eleven-year-old Abby Bonime in the part of Emily, although consistently called upon to overact, did so with a fair amount of sensibility and grace. As a matter of fact, all the children were appealing, and while this was scarcely the essential point, it did serve to reduce the large female portion of the house to smorfs and ejaculation. I have nothing to say for Stewart Chaney's all-over sets beyond the fact that they seemed to confirm the idea—or lack of idea—of the playwright; although, on the other hand, I thought Hans Sonheimer's lighting was the most skillful I have seen thus far in the season. *(At the Belasco.)*

### *Lady Behave*

THE APPEARANCE of this new farce by Alfred L. Golden has raised a somewhat desperate argument in the press as to whether it or "Victory Belles" should go down as the season's purest arsenic so far. Personally, I think there is no choice. A sort of sham-child descended from "Lady in the Dark" I suppose, the script gives us a phony psychoanalyst administering to a number of dreary dippies with his divorced and adamant wife in attendance as secretary. Briefly, a sad and tedious affair and not lightly not recommended. *(At the Ambassador.)*

### *A Connecticut Yankee*

AS HIGH, happy and handsome as is this revival of the early Field, Rodgers and Hart hit, for some reason it seemed a little long and a little topheavy to me in its present version at the Martin Beck. Perhaps this is because Nat Karson dressed it so much in the pink, pink, pink, I kept longing for the sight of any sort of old ragged muffin, just for a change. Aside from this quibble, and aside from the fact that there are no laughs, the show is authentic velvet and the prospect of hearing the old hit tunes, "Thou Swell" and "My Heart Stood Still" not only well sung but well enunciated, should keep a good many people pleased for some time. Vivienne Segal has another wonderful thousand-and-one Hart lyric all to herself, "To Keep My Love Alive"; and Dick Foran, Julie Warren, and Robert Byrn are all young, gay and articulate. The surest click as far as the house was concerned was undoubtedly Vera Ellen's smooth and hilarious dancing. Miss Ellen operates with an *abandon* (French) which is truly breathtaking and she earned the cheers. All in all, your money's worth. *(At the Martin Beck.)*

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drinks small beer at the bar while Albert and Martha drink champagne at a cloth-covered table. To Miss Scott, Oklahoma's gushing oil smells of life and freedom which are turning this territory into a throbbing new world. To Wayne, the oil just smells. Before the finale which definitely establishes Wayne as top man with girl and oil, we are shown a lot of Dekker's skullduggery, some fancy costumes on Miss Scott, many manifestations of Wayne's concern for the little pioneers (including a visit to Teddy Roosevelt), a tremendous fist fight between hero and villain (similar to the brawl in "The Spoilers"), plenty of spouting oil wells, and one long exciting wagon race in which the hero and his cohorts rush their barrels of oil to Tulsa through prairie fires and all kinds of villainously designed obstacles on the way. The script, based on Thomson Burtis's story, "War of the Wildcats," has been directed by Albert S. Rogell with emphasis on romance and rough stuff rather than on feeling for the period, but there is enough local color to warrant the film's title. As cinema it is no novelty, but is as escapist as all getout.

*"Northern Pursuit,"* as its title implies, is a long chase through the snowy wilds of Canada. The first part of it is reminiscent of "The Invaders," that English film about a group of nazis who made their way through Canada in an effort to escape, and incidentally convert some Canadians to nazism, until all were killed or captured. In "Northern Pursuit," the Germans are deposited on the coast of Hudson's Bay, get well started on their mysterious journey when an avalanche kills all except their leader (Helmut Dantine). The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are on the job of course, so we know they will eventually get their man. Before they do, however, the pursuit leads through various thrilling adventures, an internment camp, and miles and miles of beautiful snow-covered wilderness. Involved in the chase, beside the persevering nazi who holds human life very cheap, are a spy (Gene Lockhart), some escaped German prisoners, various Canadians including the pretty heroine (Julie Bishop) who is taken along as a hostage, and especially one Mountie (Errol Flynn) who pretends to be selling out to the nazis. This Mountie, a Canadian of German descent, pulls a rather elaborate man-without-a-country act through which everyone sees, especially the smart nazi. But the result is still a thrilling chase melodrama. A. I. Bezzerides wrote the screenplay, and Raoul Walsh directed for suspense. The fur-lined cast is good—and cold; somehow we don't particularly care about the fate of anyone involved. No doubt this is because we know Mountie will get nazi and because the ruthless villain, Dantine, manages to steal every scene he's in.

Sooner or later, Hollywood must decide how far it can go in showing brutality and torture in films. Perhaps this should have been decided sooner in the case of *"The Cross of Lorraine."* This film no doubt had good cinema material in its original story and in Hans Habe's "A Thousand Shall Fall" which was the basis for some of the factual background. But after four scriptwriters pawed over it, this material resulted in a confused and top-heavy melodrama. After a short introduction that sets the stage in France after the armistice, we are shown the bewildered French soldiers and how they were tricked into German concentration camps. One group in particular occupies our attention as the film portrays in full detail the cruel treatment given these prisoners. We come to know these Frenchmen well through the good characterizations of Jean Pierre Aumont, Gene Kelly, Richard Whorf, Cedric Hardwicke, Hume Cronyn, but after we suffer with them in their starvation, mental and physical torture, deprivation of religion, we are unprepared for the Rover-boyish episodes that get some of these men out of the nazi camp and into a French village in time to assist the villagers in a revolution against labor conscripting Germans. Director Tay Garnett no doubt meant well in his efforts to enlist our sympathies toward the maltreated French; he might have succeeded if he hadn't piled his gruesome details so high and hadn't been quite so fanciful in the escape and massacre scenes. The camera looks too close at Gene Kelly's battered and bruised face as the blood trickles down after Peter Lorre's heavy boot has used it as a target. Later, even though we've been made to hate Lorre, no pleasure can be derived from concentrating on Aumont's knife sinking into his fat neck. "The Cross of Lorraine" had something important to say, but missed its opportunity.

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# The Bishop and the Apple

CHARLES L. MEEUS

"FACING THE WIND like an Irishman," says Bishop Patrick Cleary, Vicar Apostolic of Nancheng, Kiangsi, in China, as he looks out from the city walls onto the ruins of his see of Nancheng, and lights his pipe, his six-feet five draped in faded purple, all that the Japanese have left him after they plundered his mission

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last June. The Bishop knows China, he knows the Chinese of China. How often he "has faced the wind like an Irishman," standing up against terific odds which only God knows; from God only does he expect a reward.

The Bishop has read Lin Yu-tang's books and he likes them. He scorns at the rubbish he has found in them, which he believes the author must surely have disavowed by now. "Look here," says the Bishop, leafing through "The Importance of Living," "the author says this: 'I could never get over two great contradictions. The first was that the theologians had made the entire structure of the Christian belief hang upon the existence of an apple. If Adam had not eaten an apple, there would be no original sin, and if there were no original sin, there would be no need of redemption. That was plain to me, whatever the symbolic value of the apple might be. This seems to me preposterously unfair to the teachings of Christ, who never said a word about the original sin or the redemption. Anyway, from pursuing literary studies, I feel, like all modern Americans, no consciousness of sin and simply do not believe in it.'

"You have a funny sense of humor, Yu-tang," says the Bishop. "I wonder what 'consciousness of sin' the Japanese may have? . . . 'All I know is,' continues the author, 'that if God loves me only half as much as my mother does, he will not send me to hell. That is a final fact of my inner consciousness, and for no religion could I deny its truth.' And just think," says Bishop Cleary, "this book is the only introduction most of our students in China today have to the very idea of religion as conceived by the West!" (Lin Yu-tang's books are best sellers in Chinese universities). " 'Still more preposterous,' the author adds, another proposition seemed to me. This was the argument that, when Adam and Eve ate an apple during their honeymoon, God was so angry that He condemned their posterity to suffer from generation to generation for that little offense, but that, when the same posterity murdered the same God's only son, God was so delighted that He forgave them all.' "

★

Bishop Cleary's eyes were like an angry sea by now, but as he paced the city wall, amidst the graves of the Chinese defenders buried there last June, he smiled and said, "I'll give you a theologian's answer to that, Lin Yu-tang, my boy, even if I am impertinent.

"The theologians have *not* made the whole 'structure of the Christian belief hang upon the existence of an apple.' There is no special reason for denying the existence of the apple, but it is no more necessary for belief in original sin than the apple of discord for belief in the fall of Troy. I wonder what Jesus meant when he said, 'This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for you'—the better reading in Saint Luke—'and for many unto remission of sins' (Matthew)? Is there not some question here of redemption? Of course there is no consciousness of original sin; none the less we might all have sinned in Adam. The act of the head of a corporate body is the act of every member of that body. The Japanese to the *n*th generation will (it is highly probable) suffer for the crime of the present-day Government. Will it be just? If so, why?"

Bishop Cleary at that moment seemed a prophetic figure with the gray hairs that he got after the Japanese "visited" his mission of Nancheng.

"Even mothers," the Bishop went on, "may tire of continued repudiation and contempt. May not a father do so also? But he will judge in a fatherly way. . . . The essential punishment in Hell consists in the exclusion from supernatural happiness. Hell varies from intense suffering to complete natural happiness. In spite of original sin, good-living pagans may hope to secure that happiness to which they are by nature entitled, even in heaven itself. There is not much 'delight' in that pathetic 'Father, forgive them . . .' The saying, incidentally, may throw some light on the previous problem. Redemption was effected neither by the murder nor by the murderers. It was effected by the voluntary self-surrender of Jesus: *oblatus est qui ipse voluit*. . . . After all it is the martyr and not the persecutor who earns the laurels.

"You will pardon me, Yu-tang, if I conclude with an impertinent remark—I use the word in the etymological sense—paganism is neither the only nor the reasonable alternative to revealed religion."

The Vicar Apostolic of the city of Nancheng closed the book with an energetic slap, gathered his faded purple robes and hurried to class. He teaches theology to his Chinese seminarians seven hours a day and has taught theology at Maynooth. He is humming, the Bishop, "The sweet little shamrock, the dear little shamrock, the sweet little, green little, shamrock of Ireland."*

# The Gendarmes and the Rising Sun

M. A. COUTURIER

I WAS returning to town in the train the other night, a little tired, a little saddened. The coach was almost empty, the light was not more than dim, dreary; at the other end of the car were two or three civilians, a few soldiers. Passing through the train two military policemen entered the car with their armbands and their revolvers, silently. Briefly they questioned the soldiers, checked their passes; then, peacefully, they sat down with them and talked. They had young faces, not harsh faces, not arrogant faces.

I thought of the imposing French gendarmes of my childhood with their dark uniforms, their boots, their seriousness, the towering horses with their glossy coats. They went about in pairs as do nuns. From time to time they would appear at Estiallet, in the courtyard of le Moulin, on some business of theirs. And, naturally, for the children that we were, their coming was always a slightly disturbing event. "Here are the gendarmes . . ." Yet, after all, my father and his workmen knew all of them by name and, if they were the "representatives of authority" in pursuit of crime, they were also Jean Brunel, or Marcel Lafond who, last year, had married Marie

*See the "Inner Forum" of this issue.

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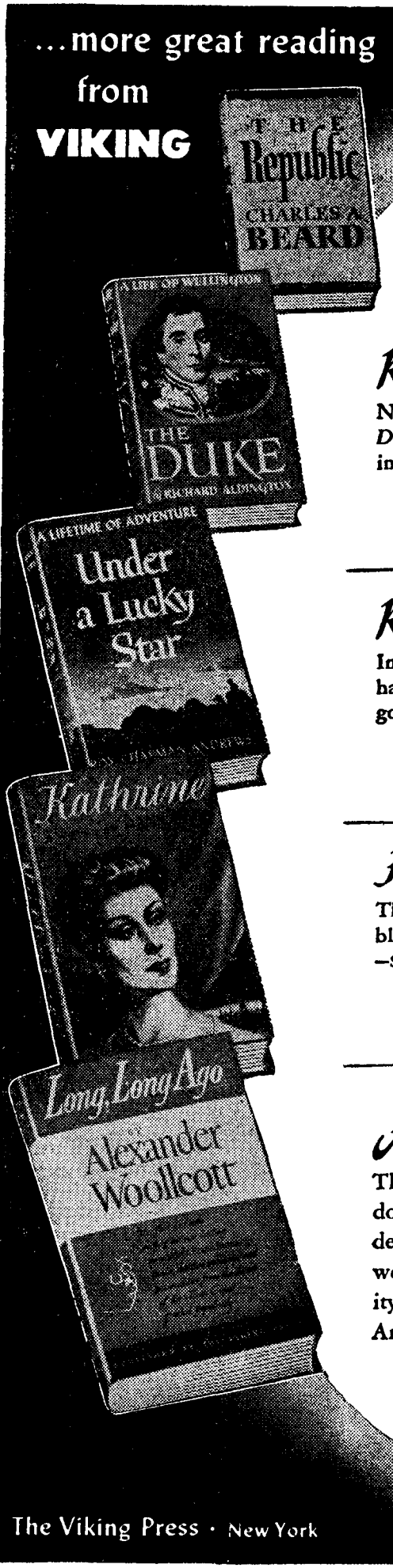


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Méchin and whom we thought a little young to be a gendarme.

One never even entertained as a possibility the idea that one could be seriously bothered because of "opinions." Happy times! Happy America where such times even today have not receded into the past—where policemen, after checking the soldiers' passes, sit on the arm of the seat, chat and go about their business.

When I got home I found on my desk a book, "The New Sun,"* by the Japanese, Taro Yashima. I read it immediately from beginning to end, looking at this long sequence of drawings whose charming clumsiness and bitter directness express so effectively what Yashima has to tell. I read the short and simple texts beneath each picture and there—with these drawings and with these short phrases—for the hundredth time, for the thousandth time, I read again the same desolate story. Mexico, Moscow, Rome, Berlin, Madrid or Barcelona, Tokio . . . Quiet and ineffective people, silently faithful to certain spiritual principles. There they are. Then the political police arrive, they take away a man, a woman, and the long months of prison and moral and physical torture begin; the deliberate work of debasing their consciences, defiling their bodies commences. The judge's trickery and his blackmail, the filth, the disgusting food, the mean torments inflicted by brutes and sometimes by sadists, the minute and detailed cruelties, all the distortion, the disorder which so quickly comes to the uncertain and to the weak when they have sudden power to wield, when they are well aware of the injustice they commit, the abuse they make of their minute and passing power. Perhaps what is most appalling in all this is that it should be so much the same thing from one end of the world to the other, in all the political prisons of state, in every dictatorship in the world.

I do not know if this world has become worse than it was in the times of princes and kings. Looking at certain of its features one might fear that this is so and be overwhelmed with fatigue and disheartened. For in the old days after all it was the Prince, the King, the "Tyrant" who was unjust and cruel. Now it is one half of a nation which harries the other half, stamps down the bodies, the fraternal souls, screams with laughter—entirely aware, too, that the wheel turns and that one day . . .

It is of slight importance, of course, whether it be because of a man or because of a party; everything starts at that moment when Power for reasons of State is contemptuous of Law, undermining the ancient and fragile wall which protects the citizen from the abuse of authority. From the day in which one acts outside of legality, violence begins and from then on violence will breed violence ceaselessly, one violent act will provoke another.

Oh, so handsome gendarmes of my youth astride your tall clattering horses with your immaculately white shoulder belts, you who took yourselves so seriously as "representatives of the Law!" indeed, in you our young imaginations saw something of the Law's tutelary majesty.

* The New Sun. Taro Yashima. 300 Drawings with narration. Holt. $2.75.

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Later, we came to know what a ponderous and terrible power of oppression and of immobility can exist in the social order and in its peace. And who among us has not been deeply concerned because of this? Who among us has not felt or known what it would be to feel the incomparable liberty which is brought into the heart by illegal, by revolutionary action when a time comes and the social order and its laws no longer count, when also a time comes and they no longer protect?

"When the government violates the rights of the people, insurrection becomes for the people and for every part of the people the most sacred of rights, the most indispensable of duties." We have known that since 1793. Alas, since then, issuing from authority or issuing from the people, non-legitimate violence has hardly ever stopped. Today, before this world spread thick with atrocity, ruin and blood, we are led again to think of that "sanctity of the Law," of Socrates's submission to it, and of Paul's, the Roman citizen's, and also of that perpetual and almost unbelievable patience of the Church in the face of constituted authority.

# Editors' Choice

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THOSE WERE THE DAYS. *Edward R. Hewitt. Duell.* $3.00.

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## Hope from Russia

THERE is something forbidding about attempting to penetrate what is widely believed to be the dark recesses of the Russian soul. Many people may be put off simply by the title of Helen Iswolsky's new book, for that is in any case a tremendous, weighty subject. To turn away would indeed be a mistake, for the "Soul of Russia" is an attractive little volume of less than two hundred pages, obviously an eminently successful attempt at popularization requiring neither deep philosophic insight or a wealth of factual knowledge on the reader's part. "Soul of Russia" is in fact filled with intriguing facts for the general American reader.

Russian Christianity as such goes back about a thousand years. It has several characteristics which at times linked it with Western Christianity and often set it apart. One of these is "kenotic Christianity," the desire to empty oneself of everything—as Christ had done in coming into this world—in order to receive God in all His fullness. In order to attain this state Russian mystics became "seekers of silence," plunging deep into the vast expanse of forest. Then as disciples gathered round monastic communities of such mystics, the wilderness would be cleared and towns spring up and the seekers would have to move on to more lonely outposts. In this manner much Russian territory was opened up for human habitation. The humility, raggedness and asceticism of these northern counterparts of the monks of the desert were extreme.

Much of the book deals with the figures who went into


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the making of the Russian nation: Wladimir, Sergius, Alexander Nevsky, who under the ordeal of this war have again become popular national saints. There were the Archpriest Avvakum who joyfully died at the stake; Yury Krijanich, a Catholic priest from Croatia, who was the first apostle—and in a lofty sense—of Panslavism; Peter the Great, who in the eighteenth century "opened the windows of Russia to the western world"; the great writers of the early nineteenth century who have never been equaled. Special mention should be made of Chaadaiev whose "Philosophical Letters" maintained that Russia's gravest error was in cutting herself off from the universalizing influence of Christian Rome. This conviction is even more pronounced in Wladimir Soloviev, Russia's greatest modern spiritual writer. And his spirit is indicated in his attitude toward the Jews: "So deep was his concern for them that during his last illness he asked his friends to wake him up if he fell asleep, since he had to pray for the Jews."

Certain things stand out in Miss Iswolsky's characterization of her native land. There was the terrible breach between the aristocracy and the Russian people which finally led to the 1917 Revolution. Some of the nation's greatest writers, from Pushkin down, drew their inspiration from their ability to understand the voice of the people and make it articulate. The idea of the classes "going to the people" to purify themselves by hard labor and sharing the common lot, and thus expiating the wrongs heaped upon the peasantry, often caught hold. The *Mir*, forerunner of the modern Soviet Kolkhoz, stressing as it did communal cultivation of the soil in the spirit of brotherhood, was based on the Christian teaching of utilizing property for the common good. It has had a marked influence on Russian thought.

Turning now from this brief dip into Russian history, and especially into its Christian aspects, we can better understand the writers of Russia's golden age. In his treasury John Cournos has made a remarkable selection. The effect of starting out with Dostoevsky's 1880 speech on Pushkin is so overwhelming that the reviewer can readily see how certain critics are convinced that this 13 pages of text is as important as the whole novel "Brothers Karamazov," published that same year. His penetration and his sensitive appreciation of Pushkin are remarkable enough. But his vision of Russia's future is positively breath-taking. Only in the happiness of all men can the intelligentsia find peace, only by taking "the saving road of identification with the people." Dictators might shiver at Dostoevsky's warning that nothing good can be built on injustice to a single insignificant person. He dwelt on the Russian capacity for universal sympathy. Socialism was to be the means, yet he conceived of it in terms of genuine brotherhood: "to take unto ourselves, in a spirit of brotherly love, and harmony, all our brethren, and unite in a spirit of international peace and communion, in accordance with the law of the Gospel of Christ."

The Cournos anthology reaches the heights and the depths. In its superb short story section, where Russian writing shows up at its best, Leon Andreyev's "The Abyss" evokes the depths of horror in the reactions of a young man who has had his very young sweetheart torn from him and ravished by three ruffians. Gogol's "The Cloak" plumbs the very depths of human pity on the reader's part. While in a lighter vein Pushkin's "The Queen of Spades" is as fascinating a short story as can be found anywhere.

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The book also includes Ivan Karamazov's presentation of the problem of evil to the innocent Alyosha, an expounding of injustices, cruelties and accounts of man's inhumanity to man that seem far less startling in our day. "The Grand Inquisitor," an attack on institutionalized aspects of the Catholic Church, is also included. But if one compares the literature of any other major country with Russian writing in its heyday, the latter seems to speak of God on every page. All this makes one wonder prayerfully how deep-rooted is the turn towards Russia's great traditions in these days of her nationwide self-sacrifice. For if it should result in a religious revival in Russia—a land that has had no bourgeoisie to stultify it—that would shake the world.

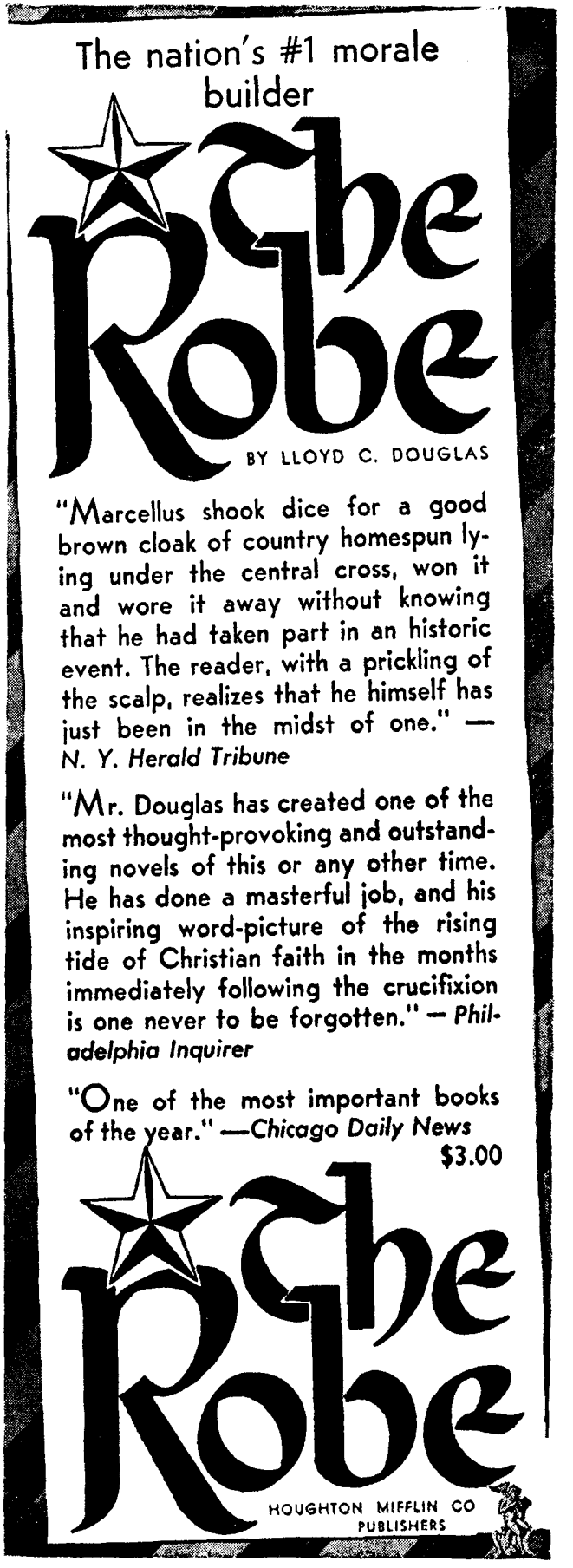
## Old New York

MR. EDWARD R. HEWITT is the grandson of Peter Cooper and the son of another of New York's mayors, Abram S. Hewitt; his wife is the daughter of Governor Ashley of Montana, a post-Civil-War politician who lived a most varied and colorful life. Such a family connection alone would guarantee an interesting fund of reminiscences, and when Mr. Hewitt's own obvious taste for recalling the past and gusto in making the past amusing are added to his special advantages of birth, a good book is sure to emerge. "Those Were the Days" is a good book, especially a good book for New Yorkers, though anyone can relish it. It is written with almost no system or attempt at chronological sequence. What is more, such volumes add a great deal to historical knowledge, for they humanize the past and serve to correct "official" versions of events.

Thus we learn that Mr. Edison is not by any means the inventor of the electric light, and we hear of a benefaction by Andrew Carnegie hitherto unknown. There is a description of a crucial episode in the history of the American sulphur industry which is certainly not recorded in the best published monograph on the subject. We learn that pneumatic tires were patented nearly a hundred years ago, but could not be made for lack of a suitable material to make them out of, and we hear of a piece of justice and generosity on the part of old Mr. Cooper which goes to prove what a decent Christian gentleman he was.

From this you may gather that Mr. Hewitt has always been deeply interested in the application of science to life and industry, and you are quite right. He himself played no insignificant part in this extraordinary flowering, which began in the nineteenth century and now threatens to engulf us, so vast have grown its proportions. Not only has he himself "invented" a few things, but all his family were generously endowed with mechanical genius, starting with Mr. Cooper himself. And as birds of a feather, they naturally knew all the other great inventors, some of them intimately. Thus we can read many an amusing tale about Maxim, Edison, Monel, Tesla. And since this family had great means and secure social position, the range of Mr. Hewitt's pages covers politics, social life, big business. Then, too, he had a hobby—trout and salmon fishing—which he practiced so assiduously that he became a sort of world expert on these fish and how to catch them. This meant making friends in English circles to which the ordinary American, however charming or wealthy, scarcely ever gains access.

All this may give you some notion of how rich a book "Those Were the Days" is, and of how pleasing it will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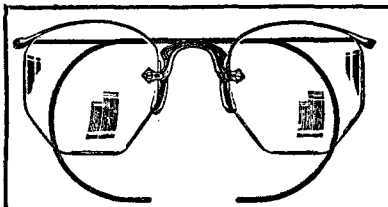

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prove to those with a taste for this sort of writing. Naturally Mr. Hewitt's own views are on the conservative side. He is all for people like Andrew Carnegie making vast fortunes—but insists that they must live up to the responsibilities which a large fortune entails—responsibilities mostly of giving it away in the general interest. Thus his grandfather's greatest monument is certainly New York's Cooper Union, into which he poured the greater part of his fortune. Here is, indeed, the best tradition of American capitalism, morally based upon a strong Christian tradition, though itself quite uninterested in theology. It was a social phenomenon severed from its roots, and hence able to live only for a short time before withering away, but while it lasted, it did great things. "Those Were the Days" criminally lacks an index.

## Poetry for Our Times

THERE is the Treasury in Washington and there is the "Golden Treasury" and those two are the only treasuries we know about. Presumably Mr. George Herbert Clarke, presenting two hundred and sixty pages of poems inspired by this war under the title "The New Treasury of War Poetry," uses the word treasury as a variant of the word anthology. He should not do this. People who are interested in poetry should also be interested in the meaning of words. There can be no such thing as a treasury of Mr. Auslander's rhetorical addresses to various nations for instance, there can be no treasury of ephemeral verse. The best thing to do is to forget all about treasuries and say that those interested in seeing what an emotion too great and too closely present will do to contemporary poets may read this anthology and find out. It is a complete collection of magazine verse about the war. This is all it is. In the index under A there is no Auden; under E there is no Eliot—angels fear to tread. Under V there is Lord Vansittart; under N there is Robert Nathan; under M, John Masefield and Archibald MacLeish; under A, of course, Mr. Auslander. Under all the letters of the alphabet there are poets writing about the war. That is about all that needs be said.

For less money, in a beautifully printed edition of the Viking Portable Library, Mr. Horace Gregory collects three hundred poems, by one hundred and fifty eight poets, the poets who have written in English during the last six centuries. Mr. Gregory has a title for his collection: "The Triumph of Life," a sub title; "Poems of Consolation," and for the divisions of the book, headings like these: "Of Love and Earthly Passions," "Of the Shades and Visions Seen, of Life Renewed on Earth," "Of the Celebration of Time and Place and the Eternal Moment." An abundance of titles indeed. But not titles for a reviewer to be smart about. We are in need of "Consolation"; we have great need to contemplate these capitalized and eternal questions; in times like these the great poets of the English languge are companions in our anguish.

Mr. Gregory has followed a principle which we cannot sufficiently praise: "this is not a book of familiar quotations. The poems are reprinted at length and as far as I can ascertain, they reappear quite as they left the hands of their makers." Thus we have "In Memoriam" in full, "Lycidas," Gray's "Elegy." There are the ancients and the moderns. It is hard to think of anything that is left out when it should have been included. It is hard to make the usual reservations about the editor's choice. It is difficult not to say, simply, that this is an extraordinarily fine collection of enduring poetry.

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# More Books of the Week

*A Certain Measure. Ellen Glasgow. Harcourt.* $3.50.

TWELVE of these thirteen essays first appeared as prefaces in the "Virginia Edition" of the works of Ellen Glasgow. Since there were only 810 copies of this edition printed, not many people have read these essays. Indeed, not too many people have read in any edition the novels these prefaces were written for. Since it appears that even subscribers to THE COMMONWEAL—doubtless some few whose subscriptions reach back to the days of the "old" COMMONWEAL—read and even admire such books as "The Keys of the Kingdom" and "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," it might be well to devote a few sentences to who Ellen Glasgow is. She is the greatest novelist of her sex this country has produced and the lady who should have won the Nobel Prize instead of Pearl Buck. She is probably the most intelligent practitioner of her art in this country—novelists are notably lacking in an orderly intelligence—an advantage when she sets out to describe the processes of what she calls repeatedly "the discredited art of the novel." She has concerned herself with the social change of generations and if Joyce Kilmer once wrote of her "evasive idealism," she has an accuracy of motive and insight and a distinction of form that the writing of those people whose ideals are so clear and rock-based almost never possesses.

Each essay was written as a preface to one of her novels, but all contain virtually as much about the process of the writing as they do of interpretation of the story. She has thought it necessary at this late date (doubtless because of the rapid deterioration of the critical faculty in American letters—witness such individuals as Harry Hansen and such magazines as the *Atlantic Monthly*) to explain to some extent the implications of each book. They have been universally about the South and almost entirely about Virginia; indeed, one of her minor titles might be that of dean of Southern writers, but professional Southerners will get scant consolation here. There are lines on every page that are worth quoting and much of her at once acid and subtle wit is directed at the South over whose agonies for forty years she has presided in her books like some tragic and sorrowing goddess.

She knows how deeply in despair the hedonism of the South is rooted, and she indicates at times the reason for the despair. "A noble certainty that he was the image of his Maker imparted dignity to the Southern gentleman while it confirmed his faith in the wisdom of his Creator." "To defend the lost became the solitary purpose and the supreme obligation of the Southern novelist, while a living tradition decayed, with the passage of the years, into a sentimental infirmity."

More generally, she writes: "The universal approach [in the novel] is not without but within; and the way to greatness leads beyond manner, beyond method, beyond movement, to some ultimate dominion of spirit. Even style, the essence of all great literature, is not a manufactured film but a vital fluid."

For its elegance of style, for its insight into the method of a great novelist and for its sheer intelligence, this is a book to be read. It seems best to conclude with one more quotation of Miss Glasgow's, as with a single fell swoop she disposes of such as William Saroyan, James T. Farrell and Albert Halper:

"Among the many strange superstitions of the age of


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science revels the cheerful belief that immaturity alone is enough. Pompous illiteracy, escaped from some Freudian cave, is in the saddle, and the voice of the amateur is the voice of authority. To the poet it is true especially if he can arrange with destiny to die young, the glow of adolescence may impart an unfading magic. But the novel (which must be conceived with a subdued rapture, or with none at all, or even with the unpoetic virtues of industry and patience) requires more substantial ingredients than a little ignorance of life and a great yearning to tell everything one has ever known." HARRY SYLVESTER.

*Crusade For Pan-Europe. Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi. Putnam.* $3.50.

HERE IS an unusual book which this reviewer found highly interesting for several reasons. First, it is the story of a man whom a kindly fate provided with a "front seat" at the spectacle of history in the making, and that at the time of a tremendous crisis. Second, it is the story of a man with a single idea who devoted his resources and his powers tenaciously and unswervingly to its realization—an idea, moreover, both logical and simple. Lastly it is full of sketches of the principal European actors in the great drama which opened thirty years ago, all of whom the author knew and most of whom he knew intimately. For this reviewer his book vividly refreshed the memories of those days and lit up many spots and corners with a new interest and meaning. Not only that: it seemed to bring into clearer relief the relentless progress of events by linking the present to the past more vividly than memory unaided would do for most of us.

Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's own description of the life into which he was born tells much. "It is impossible to describe," he says, "all the splendors of country life of an Austrian nobleman living in his castle on a large estate in Franz Joseph's empire. Such a life united health with security, dignity, wealth, leisure and independence, giving ample opportunity to do much good to a whole region and, at the same time, govern a tiny kingdom of one's own without political responsibilities. Close contact with nature, its plants and animals, combined with all elements of real culture to make a beautiful, artistic and easy form of life. This was the life for which my father exchanged his diplomatic career. And I believe that he never regretted replacing his ambition with independence, his eternal wanderings with the stability of a farmer." It was feudalism at its best, with the feudal lord "an Austrian, a Christian and a European"—so the Count describes his father—and his lady a Nipponese! How unreal, how legendary almost, seems to us American readers today this picture of life as Count Coudenhove-Kalergi found it in the castle of Ronsberg in the early years of this twentieth century! It has all the flavor of an Anthony Hope fancy laid in Ruritania. Yet it was in these circumstances and surroundings that was born in the child's mind the idea of *Europe* which became his life-passion. For twenty years—the Count is yet hardly past his fortieth year—he has had but one goal, Pan-Europe, in a regional federation of the world. During those years he has personally presented it to all the heads of Europe's states, has organized societies, congresses and meetings in almost all European great centers and is today seminar director of research at New York University on post-war European federation.

A strange combination, indeed! A man cradled in pre-medieval surroundings, with a dream for the long

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future absorbing mind and heart; could anything seem more incongruous? Yet is there not a link between the two—the idea of a Europe again spiritually one as it once was? And must not the dream be somehow realized if Europe is not to cease to be Europe? That is where, it seems to this reviewer, the deadly logic of the Count's "crusade" lies, and he will leave to others the arguments over the ways and means of the "crusade." But he confidently recommends this modern Hermit Peter's book to anyone old enough to be conscious of the colossal crisis in which we live, and the older the reader, the more it will please and profit him.

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK.

*The Duke. Richard Aldington. Viking.* $3.75.

THERE have been a good many interesting books about the Duke of Wellington, and I shall confess to having liked nearly all which came my way. The Duke's career is one of the very greatest success stories. He was the little man who always knew what to do now. This matter-of-fact Englishman from Ireland whipped the best of Napoleon's marshals and eventually the Emperor himself in a manner suggesting that some officer from Wisconsin or Ohio may yet beat the Prussian General Staff with a regiment or two, plus incidental support from the Greeks. It is appropriate that Wellington should never have played on the fields of Eton, should have been a poor shot and a dashing admirer of the ladies in any and all climes.

Aldington's biography is lucid. Therein lies its great value. Sometimes the writing is truculently prejudiced, and now and then it fires a rocket of wit just for the fun of the thing. Even so, the book remains clear and geometrical, so that the basic issues confronted are met squarely. One of these issues is Wellington's conception of humane warfare. Armies in the Duke's time were not composed of very decent chaps conscripted for service and fathered by chaplains. They contained a goodly percentage of riff-raff, sure to get out of hand. But Wellington worked as hard to control their humanitarian morality as he did to defeat the enemy. He not only strove to protect defenseless civilians and to assure generous treatment of prisoners of war, but he did everything he could as a soldier to prepare the way for a just and reasonable peace.

It is evident that Aldington ascribes this attitude to the Duke's training in the atmosphere of Angers, ancient Catholic terrain which bred soldiers who were Christians and gentlemen. They fought off the misdemeanors of the Revolution to the very end. Bred in the traditions of chivalry and in a code of honorable warfare, they were nevertheless realists. It was, perhaps, ironical that the Duke should have learned so much from the France he was to defeat. And his prestige may well have set the example—though this is merely a guess—which was followed so illustriously by the great American commanders of a later period. Grant talking about horses at Appomatox sounded like the Iron Duke.

This theme alone makes a book which tells an absorbing military story gripping contemporary reading. Now that the news of every day sets one's teeth on edge, it may do no harm to remember that Waterloo was not merely a "famous victory" but really the end of tyranny and the beginning of a new chance for men loving freedom. The man who won the fray knew that men deserve, after all, better things than war, which is hell.

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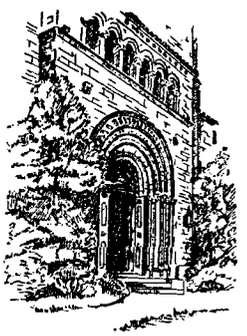

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*All Year Round. Robert M. Coates. Harcourt.* $2.50.

THERE is something wrong, esthetically wrong, I think, about publishing a book of short stories. For the short story was made to be read as a single thing, isolated and alone. A short story—if it is good—is the verbal evocation of a mood. And that mood ought to be fixed in the reader's mind, free from the unrestricted competition of other moods. Henry James's "The Beast in the Jungle," for example, conscripts the mind. But to leave this James story and go roaming through a number of them—as one would eat candy—is to be absurd. It is not only to lack discrimination; it is to be unfair to the writer.

But Mr. Coates has chosen to publish his stories. They are not all good stories. They are very uneven. Some of them—the opening story, for instance—are carelessly written. More of them are not stories at all. They are made to fit the pattern of the *New Yorker*—neither story, nor essay, an indeterminate genre fulfilling no known artistic requirement, and having an anomalous existence, like a mermaid.

One of the stories is well known, and is called "The Fury." Another, "One Night at Coney," is part of the same pattern. Both deal with the abnormal in man. The first is told, I think, more carefully and with more detachment than the second. It shows more craftsmanship, and makes no demand on our reluctant sympathy.

Most of the stories are edged with violence; but it is a violence that is often offstage. It is the violence of the sordid, of the incommunicably lonely, of the frustrate, of the self-destroying whom life has reproached, and who have had too much of it.

They are almost all stories of impotence; of men and women flawed in some way, and who have been made little with discontent and impotent rebellion. They are of men and women whose lives have been filled with poverty, with the agony of passioned longing. They are the people who continually reach out their hands to things they have no right to, and are unpossessed.

These are stories of the people who walk the sidewalks of New York, who seek the superfluous in bars, who live in little rooms in Greenwich Village, who wait with flagellant anxiety, who try to turn casual acquaintance into love, who stare with reluctant fascination at the river, who in desperation engage in murder or in suicide thinking to burst the narrowing horizons. They are the little people, of whom there pathetically are so many, who are pushed a little further over the edge of psychological insecurity than you or I. They are the people of sordid news stories. They are the lonely of heart who suddenly reach into exhausted inner resources. They are those who have been corroded by the progressing days and whose defective characters break before the assault of Time.

Mr. Coates manages, often with quiet skill, to fix them in your eyes. He creates them and reports their conduct. He judges neither. For that I pay him the tribute of my unsolicited admiration. For he makes us know that the actions and motives of all men ar ebeyond the judgment of all other men.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

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# The Inner Forum

## *Dedicated to Saint Columban* (529-615)

IT IS twenty-five years ago that seventeen students gathered at a residence in Dalgan Park, Galway, Ireland, to constitute the first Saint Columban's Seminary. At the very outset the group brought out the first issue of its missionary review, the *Far East*. Meanwhile Rev. E. J. Galvin, a native of County Cork, was securing permission to open a St. Columban's house of studies in Omaha, Neb. The next year it was decided that this new missionary society would labor in the Hanyang, China, area. The first groups of missioners left Galway and Omaha in 1920 and arrived in Hanyang that summer.

Three years later the first Sisters, the Lorettines, arrived. They were soon followed by the St. Columban Sisters and the Irish Christian Brothers. In 1927 Father Galvin was consecrated Bishop. A minor seminary was established three years later, while a boys' orphanage was established there in 1934. A native Sisterhood was started there in 1939. From 1939-41 St. Columban's dispensaries treated 137,979 patients in this territory. Meanwhile it was visited by floods and pestilence (1931) while early in the present war it was taken by the Japanese.

St. Columban's second mission was founded at Nancheng in 1928. The next year Chinese communists killed Father Timothy P. Leonard and on February 28, 1931, Father Cornelius Tierney, the mission's first superior, after several months' captivity died at the hands of the same faction. His successor, now Bishop Patrick Cleary (see page 176 of this issue), was consecrated in 1939. The Sisters of St. Columban have come to teach and nurse and St. Luke's Hospital has been established there. Except for a short period in 1942 when the Japanese took and captured the city of Nancheng this mission territory has remained entirely in Chinese hands. Bishop Cleary has recently set up a constructive program of cooperative village weaving units. Other fields are the Philippines, Korea and Upper Burma.

The American *Far East* is published at Saint Columban's, Nebraska, the headquarters of the Society in this country. Other houses are at Silver Creek, N. Y., and Bristol, R. I. There are also seminaries near Melbourne, Australia, and at Wellington, New Zealand, where Irish priests have played a leading rôle in their foundation.

### *CONTRIBUTORS*

*Alfredo MENDIZABAL* was formerly professor of the philosophy of law at the University of Oviedo, Spain. He is at present teaching political science at the New School for Social Research, New York, and is on the faculty of law of the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes. He is the author of "The Martyrdom of Spain," a book with a preface by Jacques Maritain written at the time of the Spanish Civil War and advocating international intervention to bring peace to his distressed country.

*Cuthbert WRIGHT* teaches at Assumption College, Worcester, Mass.

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